

ORIGINES SACRÆ
OR A
Rational Account of the Grounds
OF
Christian Faith,
AS TO THE
T R U T H
AND
Divine Authority
OF THE
S C R I P T U R E S,
And the matters therein contained.

By EDWARD STILLINGFLEET B.D.

The Third Edition Corrected and Amended.

2 Pet. i. 16. For we have not followed cunningly devised Fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his Majesty.

Neque religio ulla sine sapientia suscipienda est, nec ulla sine religione probanda sapientia. Lactant. de fall. relig. cap. i.

L O N D O N,

Printed by R. W. for Henry Mortlock at the sign of the Phoenix
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To his most Honour'd
Friend and Patron,
Sr. ROGER BURGOINE,
Knight and Baronet.

Sir,

IT was the early *felicity* of
Moses, when expos'd in an
Ark of Nilotick Papyre, to be
adopted into the *favour* of
so great a personage as the
Daughter of Pharaoh: Such
another *Ark* is this vindication of the wri-
tings of that *Divine* and excellent *Person* ex-
pos'd to the world in; and the greatest am-
bition of the Author of it, is, to have it re-
ceived into your *Patronage* and *Protection*:
But

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But although the contexture and frame of this Treatise be far below the excellency and worth of the subject (as you know the Ark in which Moses was put, was of bulrushes daubed with slime and pitch) yet when You please to cast your eye on the matter contained in it, you will not think it beneath your Favour, and unworthy your Protection. For if Truth be the greatest Present which God could bestow, or man receive (according to that of Plutarch) *ὡς ἂν αἰθρία λαβεῖν μᾶλλον*

*De Isid. &
Osr.*

ἢ χαρίζεσθαι θιῶ σιμρότερον ἀληθείας) then certainly those Truths deserve our most ready acceptance, which are in themselves of greatest importance, and have the greatest evidence that they come from God. And although I have had the happiness of so near relation to You, & acquaintance with You, as to know how little You need such discourses which tend to settle the Foundations of Religion, which you have raised so happy a Superstructure upon; yet withall I consider what particular Kindness the souls of all good men bear to such Designs, who end is to assert and vindicate the Truth and Excellency of Religion. For those who are enriched themselves with the inestimable Treasure of true Goodness and

Piety

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Piety are far from that envious temper, to think nothing valuable but what they are the sole Possessors of; but such are the most, satisfied themselves, when they see others not only admire but enjoy what they have the highest estimation of. Were all who make a shew of Religion in the World really such as they pretend to be, discourses of this nature would be no more seasonable then the commendations of a great *Beauty* to one who is already a passionate admirer of it; but on the contrary, we see how common it is for men first to throw dirt in the face of Religion, and then perswade themselves it is its natural *Complexion*; they represent it to themselves in a *shape* least pleasing to them, and then bring that as a *Plea* why they give it no better entertainment.

It may justly seem strange, that true Religion, which contains nothing in it but what is truly *Noble* and *Generous*, most *rational* and *pleasing* to the *Spirits* of all good men, should yet suffer so much in its esteem in the world, through those strange and uncouth *vizards* it is represented under: Some accounting the life and practice of it, as it speaks *subduing*

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our *wills* to the *will* of *God* (which is the substance of all Religion) a thing too low and mean for their rank and condition in the World , while others pretend a quarrel against the principles of it as unsatisfactory to *Humane reason*. Thus *Religion* suffers with the *Ambor* of it between two *Thieves* , and it is hard to define which is most injurious to it; that which questions the *Principles*, or that which despiseth the *Practice* of it. And nothing certainly will more incline men to believe that we live in an *Age of Prodigies*, then that there should be any such in the Christian World who should account it a piece of *Gentility* to despise *Religion*, and a piece of *Reason* to be *Atheists*. For if there be any such thing in the World as a true height and magnanimity of *spirit*, if there be any solid reason and depth of judgement, they are not only consistent with, but only attainable by a true generous *spirit* of *Religion*. But if we look at that which the loose and profane World is apt to account the greatest gallantry, we shall find it made up of such pittiful *Ingredients*, which any skilful & rational mind will be ashamed to plead for, much less to
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mention them in competition with true goodness and unfeigned piety. For how easie is it to observe such who would be accounted the most high and gallant spirits, to quarry on such mean preys which only tend to satisfy their brutish appetites, or flesh revenge with the blood of such who have stood in the way of that aery title, Honour! Or else they are so little apprehensive of the inward worth and excellency of humane nature, that they seem to envy the gallantry of Peacocks, and strive to outvy them in the gayety of their Plumes, such who are, as Seneca saith, *ad similitudinem parietum suorum extrinsecus culti*, who imitate the walls of their houses in the fairness of the outsides, but matter not what rubbish there lies within. The utmost of their ambition is to attain *eneruatam felicitatem quâ permadescunt animi*, such a felicity as *evigorates* the soul by too long sleeping, it being the nature of all terrestrial pleasures that they do *en tixen y' auyxatow tē pōtōn*, by degrees consume reason by effeminating and softening the Intellectuals. Must we appeal then to the judgement of Sardanapalus concerning the nature of Felicity, or enquire of Apicius what

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temperance is? or desire that Sybarite to define Magnanimity, who fainted to see a man at hard labour.

Or doth now the conquest of passions, forgiving injuries, doing good, self-denial, humility, patience under crosses, which are the real expressions of piety, speak nothing more noble and generous than a luxurious, malicious, proud, and impatient spirit? Is there nothing more becoming and agreeable to the soul of man, in exemplary Piety, and a Holy well-ordered Conversation, then in the lightness and vanity (not to say rudeness and debaucheries) of those whom the world accounts the greatest gallants? Is there nothing more graceful and pleasing in the sweetness, candour, and ingenuity of a truly Christian temper and disposition, then in the revengeful, implacable spirit of such whose Honour lives and is fed by the Blood of their enemies? Is it not more truly honourable and glorious to serve that God who commands the World, then to be a slave to those passions and lusts which put men upon continual hard service, and torment them for it when they have done it? Were there nothing else to commend Religion to the minds of men, besides that

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that tranquillity and calmness of spirit, that serene and peaceable temper which follows a good conscience whereever it dwells, it were enough to make men welcom that guest which brings such good entertainment with it. Whereas the amazements, horrors, and anxieties of mind, which at one time or other haunt such who prostitute their Consciences to a violation of the Laws of God, and the rules of rectified reason, may be enough to perswade any rational person, that impiety is the greatest folly, and irreligion madness. It cannot be then but matter of great pity to consider that any persons whose birth and education hath raised them above the common people of the World, should be so far their own enemies, as to observe the Fashion more then the rules of Religion, and to study complements more then themselves, and read Romances more then the Sacred Scriptures, which alone are able to make them wise to salvation.

But Sir, I need not mention these things to You, unless it be to let You see the excellency of your choice, in preferring true Vertue and Piety above the Ceremony and Grandeur

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dear of the World. Go on, Sir, to value and measure true *Religion* not by the uncertain measures of the *World*, but by the infallible dictates of *God* himself in his sacred *Oracles*. Were it not for these, what certain foundation could there be for our *Faith* to stand on ? and who durst venture his soul, as to its future condition, upon any authority less then the *infallible* *Veracity* of *God* himself ? What certain directions for practice should we have, what rule to judge of opinions by, had not *God* out of his *infinite* *goodness* provided and preserved this authentick *instrument* of his *Will* to the *World* ? What a strange *Religion* would *Christianity* seem, should we frame the *Model* of it from any other thing then the *Word* of *God* ? Without all controversy the *disesteem* of the *Scriptures* upon any pretence whatsoever, is the decay of *Religion*, and through many windings and turnings leads men at last into the very depth of *Atheism*. Whereas the frequent and serious conversing with the mind of *God* in his *Word*, is incomparably useful, not only for keeping up in us a true No-
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tion of Religion (which is easily mistaken, when men look upon the face of it in any other glass then that of the Scriptures) but likewise for maintaining a powerfull sense of Religion in the souls of men, and a due valuation of it, whatever its esteem or entertainment be in the world. For though the true genuine spirit of Christianity (which is known by the purity and peaceableness of it) should grow never so much out of credit with the World ; yet none who heartily believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and that the matters revealed therein are infallibly true, will ever have the less estimation of it. It must be confessed that the credit of Religion hath much suffered in the Age we live in through the vain pretences of many to it, who have only acted a part in it for the sake of some private interests of their own: And it is the usual Logick of Atheists, *crimine ab uno Disce omnes* ; if there be any hypocrites, all who make shew of Religion, are such ; on which account the Hypocrisie of one Age makes way for the Atheism of the next. But how unreasonable and unjust that imputation

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tation is, there needs not much to discover, unless it be an argument there are no true men in the World, because there are so many Apes which imitate them ; or that there are no Jewels, because there are so many Counterfeits. And blessed be God, our Age is not barren of Instances of real goodness and unaffected piety ; there being some such generous spirits as dare love Religion without the dowry of Interest, and manifest their affection to it in the plain dress of the Scriptures, without the paint and set-offs which are added to it by the several contending parties of the Christian World. Were there more such noble spirits of Religion in our Age, Atheism would want one of the greatest Pleas which it now makes against the Truth of Religion ; for nothing enlarges more the Gulf of Atheism, then that *wide passage*, that wide passage which lies between the Faith and Lives of men pretending to be Christians. I must needs say there is nothing seems more strange and unaccountable to me, then that the Practice of the unquestionable duties of Christianity should be put out of Countenance ;

or

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or slighted by any who own, profess, and contend for the Principles of it. Can the profession of that be honourable, whose practice is not? If the principles be true, why are they not practised? If they be not true, why are they professed?

You see, Sir, to what an unexpected length my desire to vindicate the Honour as well as Truth of Religion, hath drawn out this present address. But I may sooner hope for your pardon in it, than if I had spent so much paper after the usual manner of Dedications, in representing You to Your self or the World. Sir, I know You have too much of that I have been commending, to delight in Your own deserved praises, much less in flatteries, which so benign a subject might easily make ones pen run over in. And therein I might not much have digressed from my design, since I know few more exemplary for that rare mixture of true piety, and the highest civility together, in whom that inestimable jewel of religion is placed in a most sweet, affable, and obliging temper. But although none will be more ready on any occasion with all gratitude to acknowledge

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the great obligations *You* have laid upon me; yet I am so far sensible of the common vanity of *Epistles Dedicatory*, that I cannot so heartily comply with them in any thing, as in my hearty prayer to Almighty God for your *good* and *welfare*, and in subscribing my self

Sir,

Your most humble

June 5. 1662.

and affectionate servant,

E. D. STILLINGFLEET.

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THE
P R E F A C E
TO THE
READER.



I is neither to satisfy the importunity of friends, nor to prevent false copies (which and such like excuses I know are expected in usual Prefaces) that I have adventured abroad this following Treatise: but it is out of a just re-

sentment of the affronts and indignities which have been cast on Religion; by such, who account it a matter of judgement to disbelieve the Scriptures, and a piece of wit to dispute themselves out of the possibility of being happy in another world: When yet the more acute and subtle their arguments are, the greater their strength is against themselves, it being impossible there should be so much wit and subtilty in the souls of men, were they not of a more excellent nature then they imagine them to be. And how contradictory is it for such persons to be ambitious of being cryed up for wit and reason, whose design

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is to degrade the rational soul so far below her self, as to make her become like the beasts that perish ! If now the weight and consequence of the subject, and the too great reasonableness of it (if the common fame of the large spread of Atheism among us be true) be not sufficient Apology for the publishing this Book, I am resolved rather to undergo thy censure, then be beholding to any other. The intendment therefore of this Preface is only to give a brief account of the scope, design, and method of the following Books, although the view of the Contents of the Chapters might sufficiently acquaint thee with it. How far I have been either from transcribing, or design to excuse out of the hands of their admirers, the several writings on the behalf of Religion in general, or Christianity in particular (especially Morny, Grotius, Amyraldus, &c.) may easily appear by comparing what is contained in their Books and this together. Had I not thought something might be said, if not more fully and rationally, yet more suitably to the present temper of this Age than what is already written by them, thou hadst not been troubled with this Preface, much less with the whole Book. But as the tempers and Genius's of Ages and Times alter, so do the arms and weapons which Atheists imploy against Religion ; The most popular pretences of the Atheists of our Age, have been the irreconcilableness of the account of Times in Scripture, with that of the learned and ancient Heathen Nations ; the inconsistency of the belief of the Scriptures with the principles of reason : and the account which may be given of the Origine of things from the principles of Philosophy without the Scriptures : These three therefore I have particularly set my self against, and directed against each of them a several Book. In the first I have manifested

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manifested that there is no ground of credibility in the account of ancient times given by any Heathen Nations different from the Scriptures, which I have with so much care and diligence enquired into, that from thence we may hope to hear no more of men before Adam to salve the Authority of the Scriptures by, which yet was intended only as a design to undermine them; but I have not thought the frivolous pretences of the Author of that Hypothesis worth particular mentioning, supposing it sufficient to give a clear account of things without particular citation of Authors, where it was not of great concernment for understanding the thing its self. In the second Book I have undertaken to give a rational account of the grounds, why we are to believe those several persons, who in several ages were employed to reveal the mind of God to the world, and with greater particularity then hath yet been used, I have insisted on the persons of Moses, and the Prophets, our Saviour and his Apostles, and in every of them manifested the rational evidences on which they were to be believed, not only by the men of their own Age, but by those of succeeding Generations. In the third Book I have insisted on the matters themselves which are either supposed by, or revealed in the Scriptures, and have therein not only manifested the certainty of the foundations of all Religion which lye in the Being of God and Immortality of the soul, but the undoubted truth of those particular accounts concerning the Origine of the Universe, of Evil, and of Nations, which were most lyable to the Atheists exceptions, and have therein considered all the pretences of Philosophy ancient or modern, which have seemed to contradict any of them; to which (mantissæ loco) I have added the evidence of Scripture-History in the
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remainders of it in Heathen Mythology, and concluded all with a discourse of the excellency of the Scriptures. Thus having given a brief view of the design and method of the whole, I submit it to every free and unprejudiced judgement. All the favour then I shall request of thee, is, to read seriously, and judge impartially; and then I doubt not but thou wilt see as much reason for Religion as I do.

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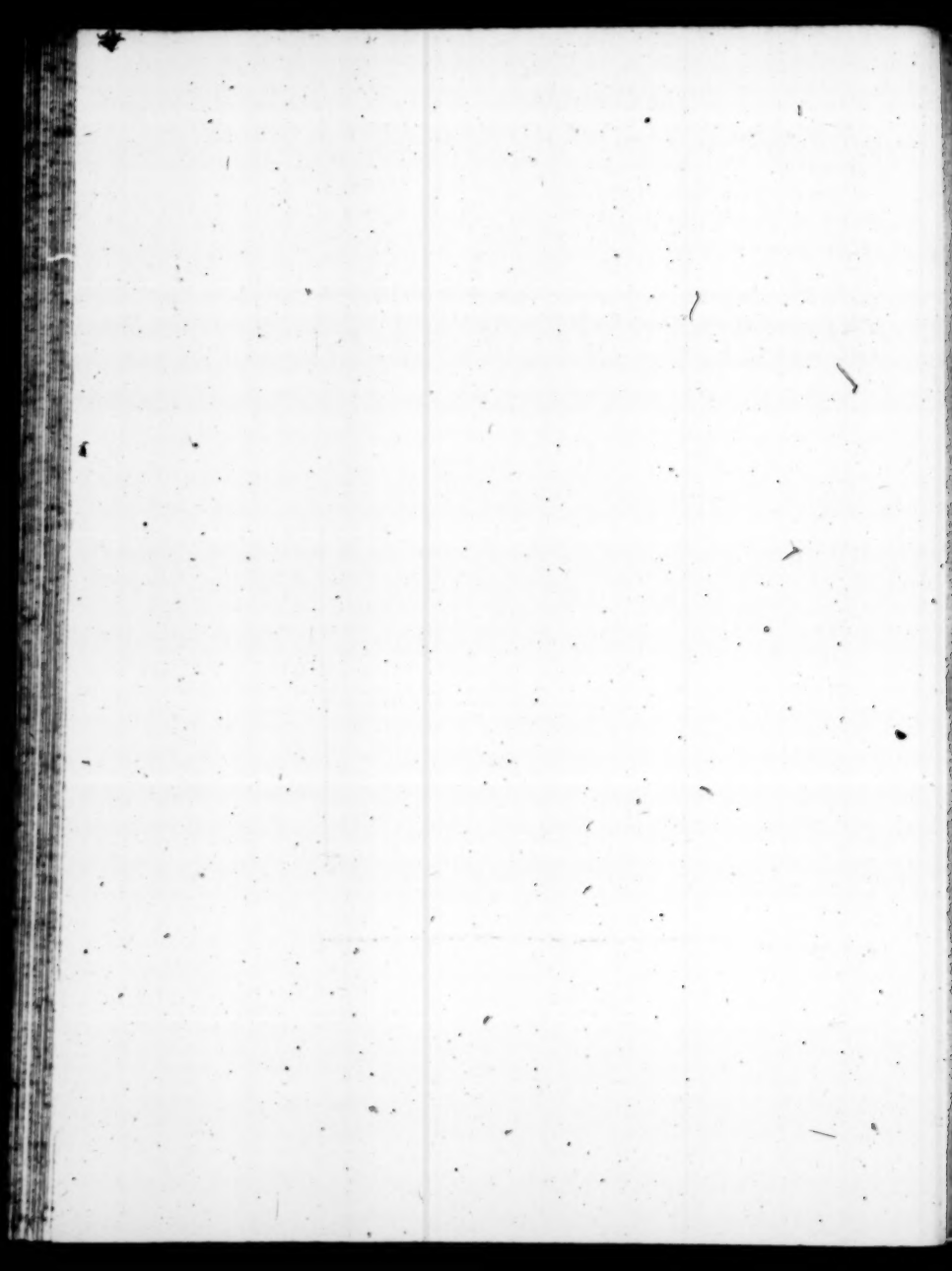
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ORIGINES SACRÆ:

The Truth Of
Scripture-History asserted.

BOOK. I.

CHAP. I.

The obscurity and defect of Ancient History.

The knowledge of truth proved to be the most natural perfection of the rational soul ; yet error often mistaken for truth ; the accounts of it. Want of diligence in its search, the mixture of truth and falshood: Thence comes either rejecting truth for the errors sake, or embracing the error for the truths sake ; the first instanced in Heathen Philosophers, the second in vulgar Heathen. Of Philosophical Atheism, and the grounds of it. The History of Antiquity very obscure. The question stated where the true History of ancient times is to be found, in Heathen Histories, or only in Scripture. The want of creditability in Heathen Histories asserted and proved by the general defect for want of timely records among Heathen Nations, the reason of it shewed from the first Plantations of the World. The manner of them discovered. The Original of Civil Government. Of Hieroglyphicks. The use of letters among the Greeks no elder then Cadmus: his time enquired into no elder then Joshua ; the learning brought into Greece by him.



Enquiries after truth have that peculiar commendation above all other designs, that they come on purpose to gratifie the most noble faculty of our souls, and do most immediately tend to re-advance the highest perfection of our rational beings. For all our most laudable endeavours after knowledge now, are only

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§. I.

the gathering up some scattered fragments of what was once an entire Fabrick, and the recovery of some pretious Jewels which were lost out of sight, and sunk in the shipwreck of humane nature. That saying of Plato, that all knowledge is remembrance, and all ignorance forgetfulness, is a certain and undoubted truth, if by forgetfulness be meant the loss, and by remembrance the recovery of those notions and conceptions of things which the mind of man once had in its pure and primitive state, wherein the understanding was the truest Microcosm, in which all the beings of the inferior world were faithfully represented according to their true, native, and genuine perfections. God created the soul of man not only capable of finding out the truth of things, but furnished him with a sufficient reason or touchstone to discover truth from falsehood, by a light set up in his understanding, which if he had attended to, he might have secured himself from all impostures and deceits. As all other beings were created in the full possession of the agreeable perfections of their several natures, so was man too; else God would have never closed the work of Creation with those words, *And*

Gen. 1. 31. *God saw all that he had made, and behold it was very good;* that is, endued with all those perfections which were suitable to their several beings. Which man had been most defective in, if his understanding had not been endowed with a large stock of intellectual knowledge, which is the most natural and genuine perfection belonging to his rational being. For reason being the most raised faculty of humane nature, if that had been defective in its discoveries of truth, which is its proper object, it would have argued the greatest main and imperfection in the being it self. For it belongs to the perfection of the sensitive faculties to discern what is pleasant from what is hurtful, it must needs be the perfection of the rational to find out the difference of truth from falsehood. Not as though the soul could then have had any more then now, an actual notion of all the beings in the world co existing at the same time, but that it would have been free from all deceits in its conceptions of things, which were not caused through inadvertency.

§. 2. Which will appear from the several aspects mans knowledge

ledge hath, which are either *upwards* towards his *M. ker*, or *abroad* on his fellow creatures. If we consider that *contemplation* of the *soul* which fixes it self on that *infinite being* which was the *cause* of it, and is properly *divine*; it will be found necessary for the *soul* to be created in a clear and distinct knowledge of him; because of mans *immediate obligation* to obedience unto him. Which must necessarily suppose the *knowledge* of him whose *will* must be his *rule*; for if *man* were not fully convinced in the first moment after his creation of the *being* of him, whom he was to *obey*, his *first*, *work* and *duty* would not have been *actual obedience*, but a *search* whether there was any *supream*, *infinite*, and *eternal being* or no; and whereon his *duty* to him was *founded*, and what might be *sufficient declaration* of his *Will* and *Laws*, according to which he must *regulate* his *obedience*. The *taking* off all which *doubts* and *scruples* from the *soul* of *man*, must suppose him fully satisfied upon the *first* free use of *reason*, that there was an *Infinite Power* and *Being* which produced him, and on that account had a *right* to *command* him in whatsoever he pleased, and that those *commands*, of his were *declared* to him in so *certain* a way that he could not be *deceived* in the *judging* of them. The *clear knowledge* of *God* will further appear most *necessary* to *man* in his *first creation*, if we consider that *God* created him for this *end* and *purpose*, to enjoy *converse*, and an *humble familiarity* with himself; he had then *expressed* *his* *love* *and* *kindness* in the language of *Clemens Alexandrinus*; *Converse with God was as natural to him as his being was*. For *man*, as he came first out of *God's hands*, was the *reflection* of *God* himself on a *dark Cloud*, the *Iris* of the *Deity*, the *similitude* was the *same*, but the *substance* different: Thence he is said to be created *after the Image of God*. His *knowledge* then had been more *intellectual* then *discursive*: not so much *employing* his *faculties* in the *operose* *demonstrations* of *reason* (the *pleasant* *soyl* of the *rational faculties* since the *Fall*) but had *immediately* *employed* them about the *sublimest* *objects*, not about *quiddities* and *formalities*, but about *him* who was the *fountain* of his *being*, and the *center* of his *happiness*. There was not then so vast a *difference* between the *Angelic* and *humane*

Protrept.
P. 63.

Gen. 1. 26.

humane life : The *Angels* and *men* both sed on the same *dainties* ; all the difference was they were in the *upper room*, the *upper room* in *heaven*, and *man* in the *Summer Parlour* in *Paradise*.

§. 3. If we take a view of mans knowledge as it respects his fellow-creatures, we shall find these were so fully known to him on his first creation, that he needed not to go to School to the wide world to gather up his conceptions of them. For the right exercise of that Dominion which he was instated in over the inferior world, doth imply a particular knowledge of the nature, being, and properties of those things which he was to make use of, without which he could not have improved them for their peculiar ends. And from this knowledge did proceed the giving the creatures those proper and peculiar names which were expressive of their several natures. For

as Cratyl.

as Plato tells us, ἡ μὲν ἀναγκαῖον ὑποτάσσεται τοῖς ὀνόματι, καὶ οὐκ ἂν ἄλλως ἢ τοῖς ὀνόματι ὁνομαζέσθαι δύναιτο : The imposition of names on things belongs not to every one, but only to him that hath a full prospect into their several natures. For it is most agreeable to reason, that names should carry in them a suitableness to the things they express ; for words being for no other end but to express our conceptions of things, and our conceptions being but εἰκόνες ἢ ἀπειράματα πραγμάτων, as the same Philosopher speaks, the resemblances and representations of the things, it must needs follow, that where there was a true knowledge, the conceptions must agree with the things ; and words being to express our conceptions, none are so fit to do it, as those which are expressive of the several natures of the things they are used to represent. For otherwise all the use of words is to be a meer vocabulary to the understanding, and an Index to memory, and of no further use in the pursuit of knowledge, then to let us know what words men are agreed to call things by. But something further seems to be intended in their first imposition, whence the Jews call it

In Gen. 2.
19.

Oedip. E-
gypt. Tom.
2. Class. 3.
cap. 1.

הכרלת המינים as Mercer tells us, a separation and distinction of the several kinds of things : and Kircher thus paraphrase the words of Moses ; And whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof, i. e. saith he, *Fuerunt illi vera & germana nomina & rerum naturae*

pro-

proprie accommodata. But however this be, we have this further evidence of that height of knowledge which must be supposed in the first man, that as he was the first in his kind, so he was to be the standard and measure of all that followed, and therefore could not want any thing of the due perfections of humane nature. And as the *Sekel* of the Sanctuary was, if not double to others, (as men ordinarily mistake) yet of a full and exact weight, because it was to be the standard for all other weights (which was the cause of its being kept in the Temple) So if the first man had not double the proportion and measure of knowledge which his posterity hath, if it was not running over in regard of abundance, yet it must be pressed down and shaken together in regard of weight; else he would be a very unfit standard for us to judge by, concerning the due and suitable perfections of humane nature.

But we need not have run so far back as the first man to evince the knowledge of truth to be the most natural perfection of the soul of man; for even among the present ruins of humane nature we may find some such noble and generous spirits, that discern so much beauty in the face of truth, that to such as should enquire what they find so attractive in it, their answer would be the same with *Aristotles* in a like case, it was *τοῦτο ἰσχυρὸν*, the Question of those who never saw it; for so pleasing is the enquiry, and so satisfactory the finding of truth after the search, that the relish of it doth far exceed the greatest Epicurism of *Apicius*, or the most costly entertainments of *Cleopatra*; there being no Gust so exquisite as that of the mind, nor any Jewels to be compared with Truth. Nor do any persons certainly better deserve the name of men, then such as allow their reason a full employment, and think not the evellness of mans stature a sufficient distinction of him from Brutes; Of which those may be accounted only a higher Species who can patiently suffer the imprisonment of their Intellectuals in a Dungeon of Ignorance, and know themselves to be men, only by those Characters by which *Alexander* knew himself not to be a God, by their proneness to intemperance and sleep. So strange a Metempsychosis may there be without any change of bodies, and En-

§. 4.

phorbus his soul might become a *Brute*, without ever removing its lodging into the body of an *Ass*. So much will the soul degenerate from its self, if not improved, and in a kind of *sullenness* scarce appear to be what it is, because it is not improved to what it may be.

§. 3.
Object.

But if this knowledge of truth be so great, so natural, so valuable a perfection of *humane nature*, whence comes so much of the world to be over-run with *Ignorance and Barbarism*? whence come so many pretenders to knowledge, to court a cloud instead of *Juno*; to pretend a Love to truth, and yet so fall down and worship *error*? If there were so great a sympathy between the soul and truth, there would be an impatient desire after it, and a most ready embracing and closing with it. We see the *Magnet* doth not draw the iron with greater force, than it seems to run with impatience into its closest embraces. If there had been formerly so intimate an acquaintance between the soul and truth, as *Socrates* fancied of friends in the other world, there would be an harmonious closure upon the first appearance, and no divorce to be after made between them!

Answer.

True, but then we must consider there is an intermediate state between the former acquaintance, and the renewal of it, wherein all those remaining characters of mutual knowledge are sunk so deep, and lie so hid, that there needs a new fire to be kindled to bring forth those latent figures, and make them again appear legible. And when once those tokens are produced of the former friendship, there are not more impatient longings, nor more close embraces between the touched needle and the *Magnet*, then there are between the understanding and discovered truth. But then will all, we are to consider that they are but few whose souls are awakened out of that *Lethargy* they are fallen into in this degenerate condition; the most are so pleased with their sleep, that they are loth to disturb their rest, and set a higher price upon a lazy ignorance, than upon a restless knowledge. And even of those whose souls are as it were between sleeping and waking, what by reason of the remaining confusion of the species in their brains, what by the present dimness of their sight, and the hovering uncertain light they are to judge by, there are few that can put a difference between a mere phantasm and a real

real truths. Of which these rational accounts may be given, viz. *Why so few pretend to knowledge do light on truths?*

First, *Want of an impartial diligence in the search of it.* *Truth* now must be sought, and that with care and diligence, before we find it: *Jewels* do not use to lye upon the surface of the earth: *Highways* are seldom paved with gold; what is most *worth our Finding*, calls for the *greatest search*. If one that walks the *streets* should find some inestimable jewel, or one that travels the road meet with a bag of gold, it would be but a silly design of any to walk the *streets*, or travel the road in hopes to meet with such a purchase to make them rich. If some have happily light on some valuable truths when they minded nothing less than them, must this render a diligence useless in inquiries after such? No. *Truth* though she be so fair and pleasing as to draw our affections, is yet so modest as to admit of being courted, and it may be deny the first suit, to brighten our importunity. And certainly nothing hath oftner torbid the banns between the understanding and *Truth* inquired after, than partiality and pre-occupation of Judgement: which makes men enquire more diligently after the dowry than the beauty of *Truth*; its correspondency to their Interests, then its evidence to their understandings. An useful error, hath often kept the *Keys* of the mind for free admission, when important truths but contrary to their pre conceptions or interests have been forbidden entrance. *Prejudice* is the wrong bias of the soul, that effectually keeps it from coming near the mark of truth, nay, sets it at the greatest distance from it. There are few in the world that look after truth with their own eyes; most make use of spectacles of others making, which makes them so seldom behold the proper lineaments in the face of *Truth*; which the several tinctures from education, authority, custom, and pre-disposition do exceedingly hinder men from discerning of.

Another reason why there are so few who find truth, when so many pretend to seek it, is, that near resemblance which Error often bears to *Truth*. It hath been well observed that Error seldom walks abroad the world in her own raiments; she always borrows something of truth, to make her more acceptable

acceptable to the world. It hath been alwayes the subtilty of grand deceivers to graft their greatest errors on some material truths, to make them pass more undiscernable to all such who look more at the root on which they stand, then on the fruits which they bring forth. It will hereafter appear how most of the grossest of the heathen errors have, as *Plutarch* saith of the *Egyptian Fables*, αὐτὰς ἐπὶ τῶν ἀληθινῶν τῶν ἀληθινῶν, some faint and obscure resemblances of truth; nay more then so; as most pernicious weeds are bred in the fattest soyles; their most destructive principles have been founded on some necessary and important truths. Thus Idolatry doth suppose the belief of the existence of a Deity; and superstition the Immortality of the souls of men. The Devil could never have built his Chappels, but on the same ground whereon Gods Temples stood; which makes me far less wonder then many do, at the meeting with many expressions concerning these two grand truths in the writings of antient Heathens, knowing how willing the devil might be to have such principles still owned in the world, which by his depraving of them might be the nourishers of Idolatry and Superstition. For the general knowledge of a Divine nature, supposing men Ignorant of the true God, did only lay a foundation to erect his Idolatrous Temples upon; and the belief of the souls surviving the body after death, without knowledge of the true way of attaining happiness, did make men more eager of embracing those Rites and Ceremonies, which came with a pretence of shewing the way to a blessed immortality.

§. 8. Which may be a most probable reason why Philosophy and Idolatry did increase so much together as they did; for though right reason fully improved would have overthrown all those cursed and Idolatrous practises among the Heathens; yet reason only discerning some general notions without their particular application and improvement, did only dispose the most ordinary sort of people to a more ready entertainment of the most gross Idolatry. For hereby they discerned the necessity of some kind of worship, but could not find out the right way of it, and therefore they greedily followed that which was commended to them, by such who did withall

agree

agree with them in the common sentiments of humane nature: Nay, and those persons themselves who were the great maintainers of these sublimer notions concerning God and the soul of man, were either the great instruments of advancing that horrid superstition among them, as *Orpheus* and *Apollonius*, or very forward Complacers with it, as many of the *Philosophers* were. Although withal it cannot be denied to have been a wonderful discovery of *Divine providence*, by these general notions to keep waking the inward senses of mens souls, that thereby it might appear when *Divine Revelation* should be manifested to them, that it brought nothing contrary to the common principles of humane nature, but did only rectifie the depravations of it, and clearly shew men that way, which they had long been ignorantly seeking after. Which was the excellent advantage the *Apostle* made of the *Inscription* on the *Altar at Athens* to the unknown God; Whom, saith he, ye ignorantly serve, him I declare unto you. And which was the happy use the *Primitive learned Christians* made of all those passages concerning the divine nature and the Immortality of the souls of men, which they found in the *Heathen Writers*, thereby to evidence to the world that the main postulata or suppositions of *Christian Religion* were granted by their own most admired men: and that *Christianity* did not race out but only build upon those common foundations, which were entertained by all who had any name for reason. Act. 17. 23.

Though this, I say, were the happy effect of this building errors on common truths to all that had the advantage of *Divine revelation* to discern the one from the other; yet as to others who were destitute of it, they were lyable to this twofold great inconvenience by it. First, for the sake of the apparent rottenness of the *Superstructures* to question the soundness of the foundations on which they stood. And this I doubt not was the case of many considerative heathens, who observing that monstrous and unreasonable way of worship obtaining among the heathen, and not being able by the strength of their own reason, through the want of divine revelation to deduce any certain instituted worship, they were shrewdly tempted to renounce those principles, when they could not

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§. 9.
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but abhor the *conclusions* drawn from them : for there is nothing more *usual* then for men who exceedingly detest some absurd *consequence* they see may be drawn from a principle supposed, to reject the principle its self for the sake of that *consequence*, which it may be doth not necessarily follow from it, but through the *shortness* of their own reason doth appear to them to do so. Thus when the *Intelligent heathen* did apparently see that from the principles of the Being of God, and the *Immortality* of souls, did flow all those *unnatural*, and *inhumane Sacrifices*, all those *absurd* and *ridiculous Rites*, all those *execrable* and *profane mysteries*, out of a loathing the *Immoralities* and *impieties* which attended these, they were brought to *question* the very *truth*, and *certainty* of those principles which were capable of being thus abused.

§. 10. And therefore I am very prone to suspect the *Apology* usually made for *Protagoras*, *Diagoras*, and such others of them who were accounted *Atheists*, to be more favourable then true, viz. that they only rejected those heathen *Deities*, and not the belief of the *Divine nature*. I should think this account of their reputed *Atheism rational*, were it any wayes evident that they did build their belief of a *Divine nature*, upon any other grounds then such as were common to them with those whose worship they so much derided. And therefore when the *Heathens* accused the *Christians* of *Atheism*, I have full and clear evidence that no more could be meant thereby then the rejection of their way of worship, because I have sufficient *Assurance* from them that they did believe in a *Divine nature*, and an instituted Religion most suitable to the most common received notions of God, which they owned in opposition to all heathen worship. Which I find not in the least pretended to by any of the forementioned persons, nor anything of any different way of Religion asserted, but only a *destruction* of that in use among them.

§. 11. And although the case of *Anaxagoras*, *Clazomenius*, and the rest of the *Ionick Philosophers* might seem very different from *Diagoras*, *Theodorus*, and those before-mentioned, because although they denied the Gods in vulgar repute to be such as they were thought to be (as *Anaxagoras* called the

Ch. I. *The Truth of Scripture-History asserted.*

II

ἥν πυρρὴν διαύροιν, a meer globe of fire, for which he was condemned at Athens to banishment, and fined five talents; yet the learned *Vossius* puts in this plea in his behalf, that he was one that asserted the creation of the world to flow from an eternal mind) although therefore, I say, the case of the *Ionick Philosophers* may seem far different from the others, because of their asserting the production of the world, which from *Thales Milesius* was conveyed by *Anaximander* and *Anaximenes* to *Anaxagoras*) yet to one that throughly considers what they understood by their eternal mind, they may be sooner cleared from the imputation of *Atheism*, then *irreligion*. Which two certainly ought in this case to be distinguished; for it is very possible for men meeting with such insuperable difficulties, about the casual concurrence of Atoms for the production of the world, or the eternal existences of matter, to assert some eternal mind, as the first cause of these things, which yet they may embrace only as an hypothesis in Philosophy to solve the phenomena of nature with, but yet not to make this eternal mind the object of adoration. And so their asserting a Deity, was only on the same account as the Tragedians used to bring in their *Θεοὶ ἀνὰ μηχανήν*, when their Fables were brought to such an issue, and perplexed with so many difficulties that they saw no way to clear them again, but to make some God come down upon the Stage to solve the difficulties they were engaged in; or as *Seneca* saith of many great Families when they had run up their Genealogies so high that they could go no further, they then fetched their pedigree from the Gods: So when these Philosophers saw such incongruities in asserting an infinite and eternal series of matter, they might by this be brought to acknowledge some active principle which produced the world, though they were far enough from giving any religion worship to that eternal mind.

Thus even *Epicurus* and his followers would not stick to assert the being of a God; so they might but circumscribe him within the heavens, and let him have nothing to do with things that were done on earth. And how uncertain the most dogmatical of them all were, as to their opinions concerning the being and nature of their gods, doth fully appear from

De Idololat. c. 1.

§. 12.

De nat.
Deor. l. 1.
cap. 63.

the large discourses of Tully upon that subject: where is fully manifested their variety of opinions, and mutual repugnancies, their self-contradictions and inconstancy in their own assertions, which hath made me somewhat inclinable to think that the reason why many of them did to the world own a Deity, was, that they might not be Martyrs for Atheism: Which Tully likewise seems to acknowledge, when speaking of the punishment of Proagoras, for that speech of his, *De diis neque ut sint, neque ut non sint, habeo dicere. Ex quo equidem existimo tardiores ad hanc sententiam proficiendam multos esse factos, quippe cum poenam ne dubitatio quidem effugere potuisset.* So that for all the verbal asserting of a Deity among them, we have no certain evidence of their firm belief of it, and much less of any worship and service they owed unto it. And though, it may be they could not totally excuse the notions of a Deity out of their minds, partly through that natural sense which is engraven on the souls of men; partly, as being unable to solve the difficulties of nature, without a Deity; yet the observing the notorious vanities of Heathen worship might make them look upon it as a meer Philosophical speculation, and not any thing that had an influence upon the government of mens lives: For as in nature the observing the great mixture of falsehood and truth made the Academicks deny any certain criterion, or rule of judging truth; and the Scepticks take away all certain assent; so the same consequence was unavoidable here, upon the same principle; and that made even Plato himself so ambiguous and uncertain in his discourses of a Deity, sometimes making him an eternal mind, sometimes asserting the whole world, Sun, Moon, Stars, Earth, Souls, and all to be Gods; and even those that were worshipped among the heathens as Tully tells us out of his *Timaeus* and *de Legibus*; which as *Velleius* the Epicurean there speaks, *Et per se sunt falsa & sibi invicem repugnantia.* This is the first inconvenience following the mixture of truth and falsehood, for the sake of the falsehood to question the truth its self it was joyned with.

§. 13.

The other is as great which follows, when truth and falsehood are mixed, for the sake of the truth to embrace the falsehood. Which is a mistake as common as the other, because

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men are apt to think that things so vastly different as *truth* and *falsehood*, could never blend, or be incorporate together; therefore when they are certain they have some *truth*, they conclude no *falsehood* to be joyned with it. And this I suppose to have been the case of the more credulous and vulgar Heathen, as the other was of the Philosophers; for they finding mankind to agree in this, not only that there is a God, but that he must be worship'd, did without scruple make use of the way of worship among them, as knowing there must be some, and they were ignorant of any else. And from hence they grew to be as confident believers of all those fables and traditions on which their Idolotry was founded, as of those first principles and notions from which the necessity of divine worship did arise. And being thus habituated to the belief of these things, when truth it self was divulged among them, they suspected it to be only a corruption of some of their Fables. This Celsus the Epicurean on all occasions in his Books against the Christians did fly to. Thus he saith, the building of the Tower of Babel, and the confusion of Tongues, was taken from the fable of the Alloadæ in Homers Odysses; the story of the Flood from Deucalion, Paradise from Alcinoüs his gardens, the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah from the story of Phaeton. Which Origen well refutes from the far greater antiquity of those relations among the Jews, then any among the Greeks; and therefore the corruption of the tradition was in them, and not the Jews. Which must be our only way for finding out which was the Original, and which the corruption, by demonstrating the undoubted antiquity Of one beyond the other, whereby we must do as Archimedes did by the crown of Hiero, find out the exact proportions of truth and falsehood, which lay in all those Heathen Fables.

Apud Orig.
C. cels. l. 4.
P. 174. 179

And this now leads to the third account, why truth is so hardly discerned from error, even by those who search after it, which is the great obscurity of the History of Ancient Times, which should decide the Controversie. For there being an universal agreement in some common principles, and a frequent resemblance in particular traditions, we must of necessity, for the clearing the truth from its corruption, have

§. 14.

recourse

recourse to ancient history, to see if thereby we can find out where the Original tradition was best preserved, by what means it came to be corrupted, and whereby we may distinguish those corruptions from the Truths to which they are annexed: Which is the design and subject of our future discourse, viz. to demonstrate that there was a certain original and general tradition preserved in the world concerning the eldest Ages of the world; that this tradition was gradually corrupted among the Heathens; that notwithstanding this corruption there were sufficient remainders of it to evidence its true original; that the full account of this tradition is alone preserved in those books we call the Scriptures; That where any other history seems to cross the report contained in them, we have sufficient ground to question their credibility; and that there is sufficient evidence to clear the undoubted certainty of that history which is contained in the sacred Records of Scripture. Wherein we shall observe the same method which *Thales* took in taking the height of the *Pyramids*, by measuring the length of their shadow; so shall we the height and antiquity of truth from the extent of the fabulous corruptions of it. Which will be a work of so much the greater difficulty, because the truth we pursue after takes covert in so great antiquity, and we must be forced to follow its most flying footsteps through the dark and shady paths of ancient history. For though history be frequently called the *Light of Truth*, and the *Herald of Times*, yet that light is so faint and dim, especially in *Heathen Nations*, as not to serve to discover the face of Truth from her counterfeit Error: and that *Herald* so little skill'd, as not to be able to tell us which is of the *Elder house*. The reason is, though Truth be always of greater Antiquity, yet Error may have the more wrinkled face, by which it often imposeth on such who guess antiquity by deformity, and think nothing so old as that which can give the least account of its own age. This is evidently the case of those who make the pretence of ancient history a plea for Infidelity, and think no argument more plausible to impugn the certainty of Divine Revelation with, than the seeming repugnancy of some pretended histories with the account of ancient time reported in the Bible. Which being

being a pretext so unworthy, and designed for so ill an end, and so frequently made use of, by such who account *Infidelity* a piece of antiquity as well as reason, it may be worth our while to shew, that it is not more liable to be baffled with reason, than to be confuted by *Antiquity*.

§. 15.

In order therefore to the removing of this stumbling block in our way, I shall first evince that there is no certain credibility in any of those ancient histories which seem to contradict the Scriptures, nor any ground of reason why we should assent to them, when they differ from the Bible; and then prove that all those undoubted characters of a most certain and authentic history are legible in those records contained in Scripture. Whereby we shall not only shew the unreasonableness of *Infidelity*, but the rational evidence which our faith doth stand on as to these things. I shall demonstrate the first of these, viz. that there is no ground of assent to any ancient histories which give an account of things different from the Scriptures, from these arguments; the apparent defect, weakness, and insufficiency of them as to the giving an account of elder times; *The monstrous confusion, ambiguity, and uncertainty* of them in the account which they give: the evident partiality of them to themselves, and inconsistency with each other. I begin with the first of these, the defect and insufficiency of them to give in such an account of elder times as may amount to certain credibility; which if cleared, will of its self be sufficient to manifest the incompetency of those records, as to the laying any foundation for any firm assent to be given to them. Now this defect and insufficiency of those histories is either more general, which lies in common to them all, or such as may be observed in a particular consideration of the histories of those several Nations which have pretended highest to *Antiquity*.

§. 16.

The General defect is the want of timely records to preserve their histories in. For it is most evident, that the truest history in the world is liable to various corruptions through length of time, if there be no certain way of preserving it entire. And that, through the frailty of memory in those who had integrity to preserve it, through the gradual increase of *Barbarism* and *Ignorance*, where there are no ways of

in-

instruction, and through the subtilty of such whose interest it may be to corrupt and alter that tradition: If we find such infinite variety and difference of men, as to the histories of their own times, when they have all possible means to be acquainted with the truth of them: what account can we imagine can be given by those who had no certain way of preserving to posterity the most authentick relation of former Ages? Especially, it being most evident, that where any certain way of preserving tradition is wanting, a people must soon degenerate into the greatest stupidity and Barbarism, because all will be taken up in minding their own petty concerns, and no encouragement at all given to such publick spirits, who would mind the credit of the whole Nation. For what was there for such to employ themselves upon, or spend their time in, when they had no other kind of Learning among them, but some general traditions conveyed from Father to Son, which might be learned by such who followed nothing but domestic employments? So that the sons of Noah, after their several dispersions and plantations of several Countries, did gradually degenerate into Ignorance and Barbarism; for upon their first settling in any Country, they found it employment sufficient to cultivate the Land, and fit themselves habitations to live in, and to provide themselves of necessities for their mutual comfort and subsistence. Besides this, they were often put to removes from one place to another, where they could not conveniently reside, (which Thucydides speaks much of as to the ancient state of Greece) and it was a great while before they came to embody themselves together in Towns and Cities, and from thence to spread into Provinces, and to settle the bounds and extents of their Territories. The first age after the plantation of a Country being thus spent, the next saw it necessary to fall close to the work of husbandry, not only to get something out of the earth for their subsistence; but when by their diligence they had so far improved the ground, that they had not only enough for themselves, but to spare to others, they then found out a way for commerce with another by Exchange. This way of traffick made them begin to raise their hopes higher of enriching themselves: which when some

some of them had done, they bring the poorer under their power and reign as Lords over them; these rich with their dependents strive to outvie each other, whence came wars and mutual contentions, till they who got the better over their adversaries, took still greater authority into their hands (thence at first every City almost, and adjacent Territory, had a King over it) which by conflicting with each other, at last brought several Cities and Territories under the power of one particular person, who thereby came to reign as sole Monarch over all within his dominions.

For although there be some reason to think that the Leaders of several Colonies had at first superiority over all that went with them; yet there being evidence in few Nations of any continued succession of Monarchs from the posterity of Noah, and so great evidence of so many petty royalities almost in every City (as we read of such multitudes of Kings in the small territory of Canaan, when Joshua conquered it) this makes it at least probable to me, that after the death of the first Leader, by reason of their poverty and diffusedness of habitations, they did not incorporate generally into any civil government under one head, but did rise by degrees in the manner before set down; but yet so that in the petty divisions some prerogative might be given to him who derived his pedigree the nearest from the first Founder of that plantation; which in all probability is the meaning of Thucydides, who tells us when the riches of Greece began to increase, and their power improved, Tyrannies were erected in most Cities (*περίτρον δ' ἦσαν ἐν πόλεσι γίγναι πατρικὰ βασίλειαι*) for before that time Kingdoms with honours limited were hereditary) for so the Schollast explains it, *πατρικὰ βασίλειαι ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς παραληλυθότος καὶ ἐκείνου διαδοχὰς γίγναι*. This then being the state and case of most Nations in the first ages after their plantation, there was no likelyhood at all of any great improvement in knowledge among them; nay so far from it, that for the first ages, wherein they conflicted with poverty and necessity, there was a necessary decay among them, of what knowledge had been conveyed to them; because thir necessities kept them in continual employment; and after that they conquered them, they began to conquer each other, that till

§. 170

Lib. 1. hist.
p. 10. Ed.
Port.

such time as they were settled in peace under established Common wealths, there was no leisure, nor opportunity for any Arts and Sciences to flourish, without which all certain histories of their own former state must vanish and dwindle into some fabulous stories. And so we find they did in most nations, which thence are able to give no other account of themselves, but that they sprung out of the earth where they lived; from which opinion the Athenians used to wear of old their golden grasshoppers, as Thucydides relates. What account can we then expect of ancient times from such Nations which were so defective in preserving their own Originals?

- §. 18. Now this defectiveness of giving testimony of ancient times by these Nations, will further appear by these two considerations: First, What ways there are for communicating knowledge to posterity. Secondly, how long it was ere these Nations came to be Masters of any way of certain communicating their conceptions to their Successors. Three general ways there are whereby knowledge may be propagated from one to another, by representative symbols, by speech, and by letters. The first of these was most common in those elder times, for which purpose Clemens Alexandrinus produceth the testimony of

Strom. 1. an ancient Grammarian Dionysius Thrax in his Exposition of the symbol of the wheels: ἰσομακρον γυν εἰ δια λεξεως μνησιν αλλα εἰ δια συμβολων αἰτιν τῶν πραξεων; That some persons made a representation of their actions to others, not only by speech, but by symbols too. Which any one who is any ways conversant in the Learning of those ancient times, will find to have been the chief way of propagating it (such as it was) from one to another, as is evident in the Hieroglyphicks of the Egyptians, and the custom of the symbols from thence derived among the Grecian Philosophers, especially the Pythagoreans. It was the solemn custom of the Egyptians to wrap up all the little knowledge they had under such mystical representations, which were unavoidably clogg'd with two inconveniences very unsuitable to the propagation of knowledge, which were obscurity and ambiguity: for it not only cost them a great deal of time to gather up such symbolical things which might represent their conceptions; but when they had pitched

pitched upon them, they were liable to a great variety of interpretations, as is evident in all those remainders of them, preserved by the Industry of some ancient Writers, as in their *kouaias*, or golden Images of their Gods, they had engraved two dogs, an hawk, and an *Ibis*. By the dogs some understood the two Hemispheres, others the two Tropicks; by the hawk some understood the Sun, others the *Aequinoctial*; by the *Ibis*, some the Moon, others the *Zodiack*, as is evident in *Clemens*, who reports it. This way then is a most unfit way to convey any ancient tradition, by being both obscure, ambiguous, and unable to express so much as to give any certain light to future ages of the passages of the precedents.

The other ways of conveying knowledge, are either by speech, or by letters. The first must be by some vocal *Cabala* delivered down from Father to Son; but words being of so perishing a nature, and mans memory so weak and frail in retaining them, it is necessary for a certain communication of knowledge, that some way should be found out more lasting than words, more firm than memory, more faithful than tradition: which could not otherwise be imagined, than that the Author of his own conceptions should himself leave them to the view of all posterity; in order to which, some way must be contrived whereby mens voices might be seen, and mens fingers speak. But how to express all kind of sounds, with the several draughts of a pen, and to confine them within the compass of 24 letters, is deservedly called by *Galileo*, *admirandum omnium inventionum humanarum signaculum*, the choicest of all humane inventions. And had we no other evidence of the great obscurity of ancient history, the great difference as to the first inventor of letters, would be a sufficient demonstration of it. For almost every Nation hath had a several Author of them: The Jews derive them from Adam or Moses; the Egyptians attribute their invention to *Thoth* or *Mercury*; the Greeks to *Cadmus*, the Phœnicians to *Taanus*, the Latins to *Saturn*, others to the *Ethiopians*: And lest the *Pygmies* should be without their enemies, some think they were found out à *grunum volatu*, from the manner of the flying of cranes.

§. 19.

Thus it hath happened with most Nations: what was first among themselves, they thought to be the first in the world.

§. 19. But by whomsoever they were first invented, we are certain they were but lately in use in that Nation, which hath most vainly arrogated the most to its self in point of Antiquity, and yet had the least reason. (I mean the *Gracians*.) Thence the *Egyptian Priest Patenis* truly told *Solon* the *Greeks* were alwayes children, because they had nothing of the antiquities of former ages. If we may believe *Josephus*, they had no writings earlier then *Homer*: but herein he is conceived to have served his cause too much, because of the Inscription of *Amphytrix* at *Thebes* in the Temple of *Apollo Ismenius* in the old *Ionick Letters*, and two others of the same age to be seen in *Herodotus*, and because of the writings of *Lyusus*, *Orpheus*, *Musaeus*, *Oroebantius*, *Trazsius*, *Thaleias*, *Milesandre*, and others. This we are certain of, the *Gracians* had not the use of letters among them till the time of *Cadmus*, the *Phœnicians* coming into *Greece*, whither he came to plant a Colony of *Phœnicians* there, whence arose the story of his pursuit of *Europa*, as *Conon* in *Photius* tells us.

And it is very probable, which learned men have long since observed, that the name *Cadmus* comes from the Hebrew קדמ and may relate as an appellation either to his dignity, as *Junius* in his *Academia* conjectures, or more probably to his Country, the *East*, which is frequently called קדמ in Scripture. Some have conjectured further, that his proper name was קדמ, upon what reason I know not, unless from hence, that thence by a duplication of the word, came the Greek Κδμωδ, who seems to have been no other then *Cadmus*, as will appear by comparing their stories together. Only one was the name his memory was preserved by at *Athens*, where the *Cadmeans* inhabited, as appears by the *Gephyrai* whom *Herodotus* tells us were *Phœnicians* that came with *Cadmus*, (and others fancy the *Academia* there was originally called *Cadmea*) and the name *Cadmus* was preserved chiefly among the *Baotians* in memory of the Country whence he came: It being likely to be imposed by them upon his first landing in the Country, as many learned

persons conceive the name of an Hebrew was given to Abraham by the Canaanites upon his passing over the river Euphrates. On this account then it stands to reason, that the name which was given him as a stranger, should be longest preserved in the place where it was first imposed. Or if we take קין in the other sense, as it imports antiquity; so there is still a higher probability of the affinity of the names of Cadmus and Ogyges; for this is certain, that the Greeks had no higher name for a matter of Antiquity then to call it ἀρχαῖον , as the Scholiast on Hesiod, Hesychius, Suidas, Eustathius on Dionysius, and many others observe. And which yet advanceth the probability higher, Lutatius or Lactantius the Scholiast on Statius, tells us, the other Greeks 1: 7th b. l. 1 had this from the Thebans; for saith he, *Thebanæ res antiquas Ogygias nominabant*. But that which puts it almost beyond meer probability is, that Varro, Festus, Pausanias, Apollonius, Æschylus, and others make Ogyges the founder of the Boeotian Thebes, which were thence called Ogygia; and Strabo and Stephanns μυυπόλειον further say, that the whole Country of Boeotia was called Ogygia; now all that mention the Story of Cadmus, attribute to him the founding of the Boeotian Thebes. And withall it is observable that in the Vatican Appendix of the Greek Proverbs, we Cent. 4. read Cadmus called Ogyges; $\text{Ὀγύγια γὰρ ἐστὶ τῆς βαλυσῶν Πρω. 51.}$
 $\text{ἡνὲν οὐδέτις Κἀδμου ἢ Ὀγύγιον διὰ τοῦ θυγατρὸς κακοῦς ἀεὶ παροῦν.}$

Maurusius indeed would have it corrected, Κἀδμου τὸν Ὀγύγια , De Regno Att. lib. 1. as it is read in Suidas; but by the favour of so learned a man, cap. 9. it seems more probable that Suidas should be corrected by that, he bringing no other evidence of any such person as Cadmus a son of Ogyges, but only that reading in Suidas, whereás we have discovered many probable grounds to make them both the same. That which I would now infer from hence is, the utter impossibility of the Greeks giving us any certain account of ancient times, when a thing so modern in comparison as Cadmus his coming into Greece, is thought by them a matter of so great antiquity, that when they would describe a thing very ancient, they described it by the name of Ogyges, who was the same with Cadmus: Now Cadmus his coming into Greece, is generally, by Historians, placed about

about the time of *Jeshua*, whence some (I will not say how happily) have conjectured, that *Cadmus* and his company were some of the *Canaanites* who fled from *Jeshua*, as others are supposed to have done into *Africa*, if *Procopius* his pillar hath strength enough to bear such a conjecture. But there is too great a confusion about the time of *Cadmus* his arrival in *Greece*, to affirm any thing with any great certainty about it.

Yet those who disagree to that former Computation, place it yet lower. *Vossius* makes *Agenor*, *Cadmus* his Father, co-temporary with the latter end of *Moses*, or the beginning of *Jeshua*; and so *Cadmus* his time must fall somewhat after. *Jac. Capellus* placeth *Cadmus* in the third year of *Othaniel*. *Parvus* the Author of the *Greek Chronicle*, in the *Marmora Arundelliana* makes his coming to *Greece* to be in the time of *Hellen* the son of *Dencalion*; which *Capellus* fixeth on the 73. of *Moses*, A. M. 2995. But Mr. *Selden* conceives it somewhat lower: and so it must be, if we follow *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who placeth it in the time of *Lyneus* King of the *Argives*, which he saith was *sedes in* *vetus Moribus Juda*, in the 11. Generation after of *Moses*, which will fall about the time of *Samuel*; But though it should be so late, it would be no wonder it should be reckoned a matter of so great antiquity among the *Grecians*; for the eldest Records they have of any King at *Athens*, begins at the time of *Moses*, whose co-temporary *Cecrops* is generally thought to be; for at his time it is the *Parian Chronicle* begins. Now that the *Grecians* did receive their very letters from the *Phœnicians* by *Cadmus*, is commonly acknowledged by the most learned of the *Greeks* themselves, as appears by the ingenious confession of *Herodotus*, *Philostratus*, *Critius* in *Athenæus*, *Zenodotus* in *Laertius*, *Timon* *Philiasius* in *Sixtus Empiricus*, and many others: so that it were to no purpose to offer to prove that, which they who arrogate so much to themselves, do so freely acknowledge. Which yet hath been done to very good purpose by *Joseph Scaliger* and *Bochartus*, and many others from the form of the Letters, the order and the names of them. It seems probable that at first they might use the form of the *Phœnician Letters*, in which

De Idol. l.
1. c. 13.

Strom. 1.

Not. in Eu-
seb. Chron.
n. 1617.
Georg. p. 2.
L. 1. cap. 20.

which *Herodotus* tells us the three old *Inscriptions* were ex-
tant; and *Diodorus* tells us, that the *brass pot* which *Cad-*
mus offered to *Minerva* *Lyndia*, had an *inscription* on it in
the *Phœnician Letters*, but afterwards the *form* of the *Let-*
ters came by degrees to be *changed*, when for their greater
expedition in *writing* they left the old *way* of *writing* towards
the *left hand*, for the more *natural* and *expedite* way of *wri-*
ting towards the *right*, by which they exchanged the *size*
of the *strokes* in several *Letters*, as is observed by the fore-
cited *Learned Authors*.

Not that the old *Ionick Letters* were nearer the *Phœnici-*
an, and distinct from the *modern*, as *Jos. Scaliger* in his
learned *Discourse* on the *original of the Greek Letters* con-
ceives; for the *Ionick Letters* were nothing else but the *full* *Alphabet* of 24. with the *additions* of *Palamedes*, and
Simonides *Cous*, as *Pliny* tells us, that all the *Greeks* con-
sented in the *use* of the *Ionick Letters*; but the old *Attick*
Letters came nearer the *Phœnician*, because the *Athenians*,
long after the *Alphabet* was increased to 24. continued still
in the *use* of the old 16. which were brought in by *Cadmus*,
which must needs much alter the way of *writing*; for in the
old *Letters*, they writ *THEOΞ* for *Θις*, which made
Pliny, with a great deal of *learning* and *truth*, say, that the
old *Greek Letters* were the same with the *Roman*. Thence
the *Greeks* called their ancient *Letters* *Ἀρχαῖα τετραγράμματα*, as
appears by *Harpocration* and *Hesychius*, not that they were
so much distinct from others, but because they did not ad-
mit of the *addition* of the other eight *Letters*, which differ-
ence of *writing* is in a great measure the *cause* of the differ-
ent *dialect* between the *Athenians* and *Ionians* properly
so called.

We see then the very *Letters* of the *Greeks* were no elder
than *Cadmus*; and for any considerable *learning* among
them, it was not near so old. Some assert indeed that *Histo-*
ry began from the time of *Cadmus*; but it is by a *mistake* of
him for a younger *Cadmus*, which was *Cadmus Milesius*,
whom *Pliny* makes to be the first *Writer* in *Prose*; but that
he after attributes to *Pherecydes Syrius*, and *History* to *Cad-*
mus Milesius; and therefore I think it far more probable,
that

B. in Eu-

feb. n. 1617

Hist. l. 7.

cap. 57.

v. Manfaccit.

in Harpoer.

Salmas. in

Consecrat.

Templ. p.

30.

§. 21.

Nat. hist.

l. 5. c. 19.

1716. 56.

Strom l. 6.

that it was some writing of this latter *Cadmus*, which was transcribed and epitomized by *Bion Proconesins*, although *Clemens Alexandrinus* seems to attribute it to the *Elder*. We see how unable then the *Grecians* were to give an account of elder times, that were guilty of so much *infancy* and *nonage*, as to begin to learn their *Letters* almost in the *noon-tide* of the *World*, and yet long after this to the *time* of the first *Olympiad* all their relations are accounted *fabulous*. A fair account then we are like to have from them of the first *antiquities* of the world, who could not *speak plain truth* till the world was above 3000. years old; for so it was when the *Olympiads* began.

So true is the observation of *Justin Martyr*, ὅτι ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἔσμεν ὡς Ὀλύμπιον ἀνελθόντες ἱστοῖν; the *Greeks* had no exact history of themselves before the *Olympiads*; but of that more afterwards.

This is now the first *defect* which doth infringe the *credibility* of these *Histories*, which is the *want* of *timely* and *early records* to digest their own *history* in.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Phœnician and Egyptian History.

The particular defect in the History of the most learned Heathen Nations. First the Phœnicians. Of Sanchoniathon, his Antiquity, and Fidelity. Of Jerom-Baal, Baal-Berith. The Antiquity of Tyre. Scaliger vindicated against Bochartus Abibalus. The vanity of Phœnician Theology. The imitation of it by the Gnosticks. Of the Egyptian History. The Antiquity and Authority of Hermes Trismegistus. Of his Inscriptions on Pillars, transcribed by Manetho. His Fabulousness thence discovered. Terra Seriadica. Of Seths Pillars in Josephus, and an account whence they are taken.

HAVING already shewed a general defect in the ancient Heathen Histories, as to an account of ancient times; we now come to a closer, and more particular consideration of the Histories of those several Nations which have born the greatest name in the world for learning and antiquity. There are four Nations chiefly which have pretended the most to antiquity in the learned world, and whose Historians have been thought to deliver any thing contrary to holy Writ in their account of ancient times, whom on that account we are obliged more particularly to consider; and those are the Phœnicians, Chaldeans, Egyptians, and Grecians; we shall therefore see what evidence of credibility there can be in any of these, as to the matter of antiquity of their Records, or the Histories taken from them. And the credibility of an Historian depending much upon the certainty and authority of the Records he makes use of: we shall both consider of what value and antiquity the pretended Records are, and particularly look into the age of the several Historians. As to the Grecians, we have seen already an utter impossibility of having any ancient Records among them, because they wanted the means of preserving them, having

§. I.

so lately borrowed their *Letters* from other *Nations* : Unless as to their *account* of *times* they had been as careful as the old *Romans* were to number their *years* by the several *clavi*, or *nails*, which they fixed on the *Temple* doors : which yet they were not in any *capacity* to do, not growing up in an entire body, as the *Roman Empire* did, but lying so much scattered and divided into so many petty *Republicks*, that they minded very little of concernment to the whole *Nation*. The other three *Nations* have deservedly a name of far greater *antiquity* than any the *Gracians* could ever pretend to ; who yet were unmeasurably guilty of an impotent *affectation* of antiquity ; and arrogating to themselves, as growing on their own ground, what was with a great deal of pains and industry gathered but as the *gleanings* from the fuller harvest of those nations they resorted to. Which is not only true as to the greatest part of their *Learning*, but as to the *account* likewise they give of *ancient times* ; the chief and most *ancient Histories* among them being only a corruption of the *History* of the elder *Nations* ; especially *Phanicia* and *Aegypt* ; for of these two *Philo Biblius* the *Translator* of the ancient *Phœnician Historian Sanchoiathon*, saith, they were παλαιότεροι ἢ Βαρβάρων, πρὶν ὧν ἔστι λοιπὸν παρὰ λαὸν ἀνθρώπων, *The most ancient of all the Barbarians, from whom the others derived their Theology* ; which he there particularly instanceth in.

Apud Eu-
seb. prep.
Evangel. l. i.
c. 8 p. 23.
Ed. R. St.

§. 2.

We begin therefore with the *Phœnician History*, whose most ancient and famous *Historian* is *Sanchoiathon*, so much admired and made use of by the shrewdest *antagonist* ever *Christianity* met with, the *Philosopher Porphyrius*. But therein was seen the wonderful providence of God, that out of this eater came forth meat, and out of that *Lion* honey ; that the most considerable *testimonies* by him-produced against our *Religion*, were of the greatest strength to refute his own. For he being of too great *Learning* to be satisfied with the vain pretences of the *Gracians*, he made it his business to search after the most *ancient Records*, to find out somewhat in them to confront with the *antiquity* of the *Scriptures* : but upon his search could find none

of greater *veneration* than the *Phœnician History*, nor any Author contending for age with this *Sanchoniathon*. Yet when he had made the most of his *Testimony*, he was fain to yield him *younger* than *Moses*, though he suppose him elder than the *Trojan Wars*. And yet herein was he guilty of a most gross *anacronism*, not much exceeding the *Græcians* in his skill in *Chronology*, when he makes *Semiramis* coexistent with the *Siege of Troy*: as is evident in his *testimony* produced at large by *Eusebius* out of his *fourth Book* against the *Christians*; nay, he goes to prove the truth of *Sanchoniathons* History by the agreement of it with that of *Moses* concerning the *Jews*, both as to their names and places, *ισοποιῶν τὸν κατὰ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἀνδρίζοντα ἐν αὐτῷ τοῖς τόποις καὶ τοῖς ὡρίαισιν αὐτῶν τὰ οὐρανὰ καὶ τὰ ἐπίγεια*: whereby he doth evidently assert the greater Truth and Antiquity of *Moses* his History, when he proves the truth of *Sanchoniathons* from his consonancy with that.

Two things more *Porphyrie* insists on to manifest his *credibility*: the one I suppose relates to what he reports concerning the *Jews*, the other concerning the *Phœnicians* themselves. For the first, that he made use of the Records of *Jerombaal* the Priest of the God *Ieno*, or rather *Iao*: for the other, that he used all the records of the several Cities, and the sacred inscriptions in the Temples. Who that *Jerombaal* was, is much discussed among learned men, the finding out of which, hath been thought to be the most certain way to determine the age of *Sanchoniathon*. The learned *Bochartus* conceives him to be *Gideon*, who in Scripture is called *Jerubbaal*; which is of the same sense in the *Phœnician* language, only after their custom changing one *b* into *m*, as in *Ambubaja Sambuca*, &c. But admitting the conjecture of this learned person concerning *Jerubbaal*, yet I see no necessity of making *Sanchoniathon* and him co-temporary; for I nowhere find any thing mentioned in *Porphyrie* implying that, but only that he made use of the records of *Jerubbaal*, which he might very probably do at a considerable distance of time from him, whether by those *ἱστορίαι* we mean the *Annals* written by him, or the records

Prop. Evangel. l. 10. c. 8. p. 235.

Geogr. Sac. cr. p. 1. 1. 2. c. 17.

concerning his actions; either of which might give *Sancho-*
niathon considerable light into the history either of the *Isra-*
elites or *Phœnicians*. And it is so much the more probable,
 because presently after the death of *Gideon*, the *Israelites*
 worshipped *Baal-berith*; by which most probably is meant
 the Idol of *Berith* or *Berytus*, the place where *Sancho-*
nathon lived; by which means the *Berytians* might come ea-
 sily acquainted with all the remarkable passages of *Jerub-*
baal.

But I cannot conceive how *Sancho-*
nathon could be co-
 temporary with *Gideon* (which yet if he were, he falls 182
 years short of *Moses*) especially because the building of
Tyre, which that Author mentions as an ancient thing (as
 hath been observed by *Scaliger*) is by our best *Chronologers*
 placed about the time of *Gideon*, and about 65 years be-
 fore the destruction of *Troy*. I know *Bochartus*, to avoid
 this argument, hath brought some evidence of several places
 called *Tyrus* in *Phœnicia*, from *Scylax* his *Periplus*: but
 none, that there was any more then one *Tyrus* of any great
 repute for antiquity. Now this *Tyrus Josephus* makes but
 240 years elder then *Solomons Temple*, and *Iustin* but one
 year elder then the destruction of *Troy*. Neither can any
 account be given why *Sidon* should be so much celebrated by
 ancient Poets, as *Strabo* tells us, when *Tyre* is not so much
 as mentioned by *Homer*, if the famous *Tyre* were of so
 great antiquity and repute as is pretended. It cannot be de-
 nied but that there is mention in Scripture of a *Tyre* elder
 then this we speak of, which we read of *Joshua* 19. 29.
 which some think to be that which was called *Palatyrus*, which
Strabo makes to be 30 furlongs distant from the great *Tyre*;
 but *Pliny* includes *Palatyrus* within the circumference of
Tyre, and so makes the whole circuit of the City to be 19
 miles. It is not to me so certain to what place the name of
Palatyrus refers, whether to any *Tyrus* before the first
 building of the great *Tyre*, or to the ruins of the great *Tyre*
 after its destruction by *Nebuchadnezzar*, compared with the
 new *Tyre*, which was built more inward to the Sea, and
 was after besieged by *Alexander the great*. It may seem pro-
 bable that *Palatyrus* may relate to the ruins of the great *Tyre*,

in that it was first included in its circuit, and chiefly because of the prediction in *Ezekiel 26. 4.* *Thou shalt be built no more*; for the *Tyre* erected after, was built not on the Continent, but almost in the *Sea*. If so, then *Palatyrus*, or the old famous *Tyrus* might stand upon a rock upon the brink of the Continent, and so the great argument of *Bochartus* is easily answered, which is, that after it is mentioned in *Sanchoiathons history*, that *Hyspouuranus* dwelt in *Tyre* upon the falling out between him and his brother *Ufsous*, *Ufsous* first adventured *εἰς τὸ ναυαγῆσαι*, to go to sea, which, saith he, evidently manifests that the *Tyre* mentioned by *Sanchoiathon* was not the famous Insular *Tyrus*, but some other *Tyre*. This argument, I say, is now easily answered, if the famous *Tyre* before its destruction by *Nebuchadnezzar* did stand upon the Continent; for then it might be the old famous *Tyre* still, notwithstanding what *Sanchoiathon* speaks of the first venturing to sea after *Tyre* was built. So then I conceive these several ages agreeable to the same *Tyre*; the first was when it was a high strong rock on the sea-side without many inhabitants; so I suppose it was when mentioned by *Joshua* as the bound of the tribe of *Asher*. The second Age was, when it was built a great City by the *Sidonians* upon the former place, and grew very populous and famous, which lasted till *Nebuchadnezzars* time; after this, though it were never built up in the Continent again, yet a little further into the *Sea*, a new and goodly City was erected, which was called new *Tyre*, and the remains on the Continent-side *Palatyrus*. Thus far then we have made good *Scaligers* opinion against *Bochartus*, that the famous *Sanchoiathon* is not so old as he is pretended to be.

Which will be further manifest, if that *Abibalsus*, to whom §. 3. *Sanchoiathon* is supposed to dedicate his History, were the Father to *Hiram*, co temporary with *Solomon*, as *Jos. Scaliger* Not in Eu-
scb. Chr.
p. 12. supposeth, who was 154 years after the destruction of *Troy*. In the *Tyrian Dynasties* produced by *Scaliger* out of the *Phœnician Annals*, this *Abibalsus* is the first who occurs, and is co-temporary with *David*: *Sanchoiathon* then is of no Canon. i-
great
antiquity, if this were the time he lived in. But *Bo-
chartus* well observes that it is not spoken of *Abibals* King of

of Tyre, but of *Abibalus* King of *Berytus*, whom we may allow to be somewhat nearer the time of *Moses* than the other *Abibalus*, as the *Phœnician Annals* make it appear, as *Porphry* tells us; but yet we find his antiquity is not so great as to be able to contest with *Moses*, as *Porphry* himself confesseth, although we may freely acknowledge him to be far elder than any of the *Greek Historians*; which is all *Vossius* contends for, and sufficiently proves; but we are far from yielding him co-temporary with *Semiramis*, as *Porphry* would have him, and yet makes him junior to *Moses*, and to live about the time of the *Trojan war*; which is to reconcile the distance of near 800 years: such miserable confusion was there in the best learned *Heathens* in their computation of ancient times.

De hist.

Græc. l. 1.

c. 1.

§. 6.

Having thus cleared the antiquity of *Sanchoniathon*, and the *Phœnician History*, we are next to consider the fidelity of it. This *Sanchoniathon* is highly commended for, both by *Porphry*, and his Translator into *Greek*, *Philo Byblinus*, who lived in *Adrians* time: and *Theodoret* thinks his name in the *Phœnician language* signifies *ἐπισκοπῆς*, which *Becharius* endeavours to fetch from thence, and conceives the name to be given him when he set himself to write his History; and he wisheth, and so do we, that he had been then *ἄνθρωπος ἀληθείας*, and made it appear by his writing that he had been a Lover of Truth. *Philo* saith he was *ἀνὴρ πολυμαθὴς καὶ περὶ πνεύματος*, a very learned and inquisitive man; but either he was not so diligent to enquire after, or not so happy to light on any certain records, or if he did, he was not overmuch a Lover of Truth, in delivering them to the world. How faithful he was in transcribing his history from his records, we cannot be sufficient Judges of, unless we had those books of *Tanais*, and the sacred Inscriptions, and the records of Cities, which he pretends to take his history from, to compare them together. But by what remains of his history, which is only the first book concerning the *Phœnician Theology* extant in *Eusebius*, we have little reason to believe his history of the world and eldest times, without further proof than he gives of it, there being so much obscurity and confusion in it, when he makes a *Chaos* to be the first beginning of all things,

things, and the *Gods* to come after, makes the $\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\gamma\alpha\upsilon$ and $\gamma\eta\upsilon\sigma$, the son of *Chryser* or *Vulcan*, and again the *man* born of earth to be several generations after $\omega\alpha\iota\tau\ \&\ \tau\epsilon\tau\alpha\rho\tau\eta\gamma\alpha\upsilon$, who were the first mortal men; and yet from the two brethren $\tau\alpha\upsilon\iota\sigma\iota\varsigma$ and $\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\gamma\alpha\upsilon$ came two *Gods*, whereof one was callen *Ayphs*, and the other *Ayphots*, and this latter was worshipped with as much *eneration* as any of their *Gods*. Yet from these things, as foolish and ridiculous as they are, it is very probable the *Gnosticks* and the several subdivisions of them might take the rise of their several *Eones* and $\alpha\epsilon\lambda\upsilon\iota\alpha\varsigma$: for here we find $\alpha\iota\omega\kappa$ and $\tau\epsilon\tau\alpha\rho\tau\eta\gamma\alpha\upsilon$ made two of the number of the *Gods*; but the rest of the names, they according to their several *Sccts* took a liberty of altering, according to their several *fancies*. This is far more probable to me, than that either *Hesiods* $\theta\epsilon\omicron\gamma\omega\gamma\iota\alpha$ should be the ground of them; or the opinion of a late German *Divine*, who conceives that *Philo Byblins* did in imitation of the *Gnosticks*, form this whole story of the *Phœnician Theology*. For although I am far from believing what *Kircher* somewhere tells us, that he had once got a sight of *Sanchroniathons* Original History (it being not the first thing that learned man hath been deceived in) yet I see no ground of so much *previsness*, as because this history pretends to so much antiquity, we should therefore presently condemn it as a *figment* of the Translator of it. For had it been so, the *Antagonists* of *Porphyry*, *Methodius*, *Apollinaris*, but especially *Eusebius*, so well versed in antiquities, would have found out so great a cheat: Although I must confess they were oft-times decieved with *pie fraudes*; but then it was when they made for the *Christians*, and not against them, as this did. But besides a *fabulous confusion* of things together, we have some things delivered concerning their *Gods*, which are both contrary to all natural notions of a *Deity*, and to those very common principles of *humanity*, which all acknowledge. As when $\chi\epsilon\iota\sigma$, or *Saturn*, suspecting his son *Sadidus*, destroyed him with his own hands, and warred against his Father *Uranus*, and after destroyed him likewise, and buried his brother *Atlas* alive in the earth; which being taken, as *Philo Byblins* contends they ought to be, in the literal sense, are such incongruities

Congruities to all notions of a *divine nature*, that it is the greatest wonder there should be any that should believe there was any God, and believe these were Gods together.

§. 7.

But although there be so many gross *fables* and *inconsistencies* in this *Phœnician Theology*, that are so far from meriting belief in themselves, that it were a sufficient forfeiture of reason to say they were *credible*; yet when we have a greater light in our hands of *divine revelation*, we may in this *dungeon* find out many excellent remainders of the ancient tradition, though miserably corrupted, as concerning the *Creation*, the *Original of Idolatry*, the *invention of Arts*, the *foundation of Cities*, the *Story of Abraham*, of which in their due place. That which of all seems the clearest in this *Theology*, is the open owning the *original of Idolatry* to have been from the consecration of some eminent persons after their death, who have found out some useful things for the world while they were living: Which the subtiler Greeks would not admit of, viz. that the persons they worshipped were once men, which made them turn all into *Allegories* and *Mystical senses* to blind that *Idolatry* they were guilty of the better among the ignorant: which makes *Philo Byblus* so very angry with the *Neoterick Grecians*, as he calls them, *οἱ νεωτέρων ἑλλήνων τῶν ἀνθρώπων τὰς ἀνὰ θεῶν μυθολογίας ἐν ἀνθυποκρίσεσιν ὡς ποικίλεις ἀνυπόστατον καὶ ἀσέβητον ἀνὰ θεῶν*. That with a great deal of force and straining they turned all the stories of the Gods into *Allegories* and *Physical discourses*. Which is all the *Ingenuity* that I know is to be found in this *Phœnician Theology*, that therein we find a free acknowledgment of the beginning of the *Heathen Idolatry*; and therefore *Sanchoniathon* was as far from advancing *Porphyries Religion*, as he was in the least from overthrowing the *credibility of Christianity*.

Apud Euseb.
Feb. Præf.
l. 1. c. 6.
p. 23.

§. 8.

The next we come to then, are the *Egyptians*; a people so unreasonably given to *fables*, that the wisest action they did, was to conceal their Religion, and the best office their Gods had, was to hold their fingers in their mouths, to command silence to all that came to worship them. But we design not here any set discourse concerning the vanity of the *Egyptian The-*

Theology, which yet was so monstrously ridiculous, that even those who were over-run with the height of *Idolatry* themselves, did make it the object of their scorn and laughter. And certainly had we no other demonstration of the greatness of mans *Apostacy* and *degeneracy*, the *Egyptian Theology* would be an *irrefragable evidence* of it: For who could but imagine a strange lowness of spirit in those who could fall down and worship the basest and most contemptible of creatures? Their *Temples* were the best *Hieroglyphicks* of themselves, fair and goodly structures without, but within some deformed creature enshrouded for *veneration*. But though the *Egyptians* had lost their *credit* so much as to matters of *Religion*; yet it may be supposed, that they who were so famed for *wisdom* and *antiquity*, should be able to give a full and exact account of themselves through all the ages of the world. And this they are so far from being *defective* in, that if you will believe them, they will give you an account of themselves many thousands of years before ever the world was made: but the peculiar *vanity* of their *Chronology* will be handled afterwards: That we now enquire into, is, what certain records they had of their own *antiquity*, which might call for assent from any unprejudiced mind: whether there be any thing really answering that loud and unparalleled cry of *antiquity* among the *Egyptians*, whereby they will make all other Nations in comparison of them to be but of yesterday, and to know nothing. We question not now their pretence to *wisdom* and *learning*, but are the more in hopes to meet with some certain way of satisfaction concerning *ancient times*, where *learning* is supposed to have flourished so much, when even *Greece* it self was accounted *Barbarous*.

The great Basis of all the *Egyptian History* depends on the credit of their ancient *Hermes*, whom out of their *veneration* they called *Trismegistus*; for to him they ascribe the first invention of their *learning*, and all excellent *Arts*; from him they derive their *history*; their famous *Historian Manetho*, professing to transcribe his *Dynasties* from the pillars of *Hermes*. We shall therefore first see of what credit and antiquity *Hermes* himself was, and of what account particularly

§ 9.

De nat.
Deor. l. 3.

cularly those pillars were which hold up all the *Fabrick* of *Manetho* his *Dynasties*. For *Hermes* himself, the story concerning him is so various and uncertain, that some have from thence questioned whether ever there were such a person or no, because of the strangely different account that is given of him. *Cotta* in *Tully*, in order to the establishing his *Academical* doctrine of *withholding assent*, mentions no fewer then five *Mercuries*; of which, two he makes *Egyptian*, one of them the *Hermes* we now speak of, whom the *Egyptians* call *Thoyth*, and was the Author both of their *Laws* and *Letters*. The *Egyptians*, as appears by *Diodorus*, make him to be a *sacred Scribe* to *Osiris*, and to have instructed *Isis*; and when *Osiris* went upon any warlike Expedition, he committed the management of affairs to him for his great wisdom. The *Phœnicians* preserve his memory among them too: for *Philo Byblius* saith, that *Sanchoniathon* described his *Theology* from the books of *Taaucus*, whom the *Egyptians* call *Thoyth*, who was the first inventor of *Letters*, and was a *Counsellor* to *Saturn*, whose advice to be much relied on. What now must we pitch upon in so great uncertainties? how come the *Phœnician* and *Egyptian Theology* to come both from the same person, which are conceived so much to differ from each other? If we make the stories of *Osiris* and *Isis* to be fabulous, and meerly *Allegorical*, as *Plutarch* doth, then *Mercury* himself must become an *Allegory*, and the *Father of Letters* must be an *Hieroglyphick*. If we admit the *Egyptians* narrations to be real, and seek to reduce them to truth, and thereby make *Osiris* to be *Misraim* the son of *Cham*, who first ruled in *Egypt*, all that we can then affirm of *Hermes*, is, that he might be some useful person, who had a great influence both upon the *King* and *State*, and did first settle the Nation in a *politic* way of government, whose memory on that account the *Egyptians* might preserve with the greatest veneration; and when they were once fallen into that *Idolatry* of consecrating the memories of the first contributors to the good of mankind, they thought they had the greatest reason to adore his memory, and so by degrees attributed the invention of all useful things to him: For so it is apparent they did, when

Iam-

Iamblichus tells us the Egyptians attributed all their books to Mercury, as the Father of them; because he was reputed the Father of wit and learning, they made all the off-springs of their brains to bear their Fathers name. And this hath been the great reason the world hath been so long time imposed upon with varieties of books going under the name of *Hermes Tresmegistus*. For he was not the first of his kind, who in the early days of the Christian world, obtruded upon the world that Cento or confused mixture of the Christian, Platonick, and Egyptian doctrine, which is extant still under the name of *Hermes Tresmegistus*; whose vanity and falshood hath been sufficiently detected by learned men. There were long before his time extant several Mercurial books, as they were called, which none of the wiser Heathen did ever look on as any other then Fables and Impositions, as appears by *Porphyrus* letter to *Arabo* the Egyptian Priest, and *Iamblichus* his answer to it in his Book of the Egyptian Mysteries.

We have then no certainty at all, notwithstanding the great fame of *Hermes*, of any certain records of ancient times, unless they be contained in those sacred Inscriptions from whence *Manetho* took his history. It must be acknowledged that the most ancient way of preserving any monuments of learning in those elder times was by these inscriptions on pillars, especially among the Egyptians, as is evident from the several testimonies of *Galen*, *Proclus*, *Iamblichus*, and the author of the Book called *Sopientia secundum Egyptios*, adjoyned to *Aristotle*, who all concur in this, that what ever laudable invention they had among them, it was inscribed on some pillars, and those preserved in their Temples which were instead of Libraries to them. *Manetho* therefore to make his story the more probable pretends to take all his relations from these sacred Inscriptions; and as *Eusebius* tells us, translated the whole Egyptian History into Greek, beginning from their Gods, and continuing his History down near the time of *Darius Codmannus*, whom *Alexander* conquered: for in *Eusebius* his *Chronica* mention is made of *Manetho* his History, ending 16. year of *Alexander Ochus*, which, saith *Vossius*, was in the second year

De Myst. l. 1.

§. 4.

Gall. l. 1. c.

Iul. c. 1.

Procl. in

Tim. p. 31.

Iamb. de

Myst. c. 2.

Sap. c. 2.

f. 1.

De hist.
Græc. l. I
c. 14.

of 107. Olympiad. This *Manetho Gebenytta* was High Priest of *Heliopolis* in the time of *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*; at whose request he writ his History, which he digested into three *Tomes*, the first containing the 11. *Dynasties of the Gods and Heroes*, the 2d. 8. *Dynasties*, the 3d. 12. all containing, according to this fabulous computation, the sum of 53535. years. These *Dynasties* are yet preserved, being first epitomized by *Julius Africanus*, from him transcribed by *Eusebius* in his *Chronica*, from *Eusebius* by *Georgius Syncellus*, out of whom they are produced by *Jos. Scaliger*, and may be seen both in *Eusebius*; and his *Canones Isagogici*.

§. II.

Now *Manetho*, as appears by *Eusebius*, voucheth this as the main test many of his credibility, that he took his History, ἐκ τῶν ἐν τῇ Σηριαδικῇ γῇ κειμένων συγγρ., ἰεῶν διαλέκτῳ, ἃ ἱερογυφικαῖς γράμμασι κεχαραγισμένον, ὑπὸ Θουθ τοῦ πρώτου Ἐγυπτίου, καὶ ἱερωνυμίδου κατὰ τὸν καταλυσμον ἐκ τῆς ἱερᾶς διαλέκτου εἰς τὴν ἑλληνίδα τῶνδε γράμμασι ἱερογυφικαῖς, καὶ ὑπὸ Πηδων ἐκ βίβλοις ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀγαθοδαίμονος τοῦ δευτέρου Ἐγυπτίου, πατρὸς τοῦ τῶν Τατ τοῦ τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς καὶ ἱερῶν Ἀγυπτῶν. From some pillars in the Land of *Seriad*, in which they were inscribed in the sacred dialect by the first *Mercury Tyth*, and after the flood were translated out of the sacred dialect into the Greek tongue in Hieroglyphick Characters, and are laid up in books among the *Revestries* of the Egyptian Temples, by *Agathodamon*, the second *Mercury*, the Father of *Tat*. Certainly this fabulous author could not in fewer words have more fully manifested his own *Impossures*, nor blasted his own credit more than he hath done in these, which it is a wonder so many learned men have taken so little notice of, which have found frequent occasion to speak of *Manetho* and his *Dynasties*. This I shall make appear by some great *improbabilities*, and other plain *impossibilities* which are concluded in them. The *improbabilities* are, first such pillars, being in such a place as *Seriad*, and that place no more spoken of either by himself, or by any other *Egyptians*, nor any use made of those inscriptions by any other but himself. As to this terra *Seriadica* where it should be, the very learned and inquisitive

siue Joseph Scaliger plainly gives out, and ingenuously
 professeth his ignorance. For in his notes on the fragments
 of *Manetho* in *Eusebius*, when he comes to that $\epsilon\tau\tau\alpha\gamma\eta$
 $\Sigma\eta\mu\alpha\delta\iota\alpha\eta$, he only saith, *Quæ nobis ignota, quarant Studio-*
si. But *Isaac Vossius* in his late discourses de *antiquitate mundi*,
 cries *ignota*, and confidently perswades himself that it is the
 same with *Seirath*, mentioned *Judg.* 3. 16. Indeed were
 there nothing else to be considered but affinity of names, it
 might well be the same, but that סמרים which we render
 the stone quarries, should signifie these pillars of *Mercury*,
 is somewhat hard to conceive. The *Seventy* render it, as
 himself observes, $\tau\alpha\ \gamma\lambda\omega\sigma\sigma\alpha$, by which they understand gra-
 ven Images; So the word is used *2 Chron.* 33. 19. *Dent.* 7.
 5. *Isai.* 10. 19. The vulgar *Latine* renders it *ad locum I-*
dolorum, which were the certain interpretation if *Chytraus*
 his conj. & sure were true, that *Eglon* had lately set up Idols
 there; but if it be meant of pillars, I cannot but approve
 of *Junius* his interpretation, which I conceive bids fairest
 to be the genuine sense of the place, viz. that these stones
 here, were the 12 stones pitched by *Joshua* in *Gilgal* after
 the *Israelites* passed over *Jordan*; and these stones are said
 to be by *Gilgal*, *Judg.* 3. 19. So that notwithstanding this
 handsome conjecture, we are as far to seek for the pillars of
Mercury as ever we were, and may be so to the worlds
 end. Secondly, the standing of these pillars during the
 flood, which must be supposed certainly to have some sin-
 gular vertue in them to resist such a torrent of waters, which
 overthrew the strongest built houses, and most compacted
 Cities. The plain impossibilities are first, that *Manetho*
 should transcribe his Dynasties from the beginning of the
 History of *Aegypt*, to almost the time of *Alexander*, out
 of sacred Inscriptions of *Thoyth*, who lived in the begin-
 ning of the very first Dynasty according to his own Com-
 putation. Sure this *Thoyth* was an excellent Prophet, to
 write an History for above 50000 years to come, as *Ma-*
necho reckons it. Secondly, it is as well still, that his Hi-
 story after the flood should be translated into Hierogly-
 phick Characters; what kind of translation is that? we
 had thought Hieroglyphicks had been representations of
 things,

Not. in gr.

Euseb. p.

408.

De at.

mund.

cap. 10.

Josh. 4.

19, 20, 21.

things, and not of sounds and letters, or words : How could this History have at first been written in any tongue, when it was in Hieroglyphicks ? Do Hieroglyphicks speak in several Languages, and are they capable of changing their tongues ? But thirdly, it is as good still, that the second Mercury or Agathodamon did translate this History so soon after the Flood into Greek : Was the Greek tongue so much in request so soon after the Flood, that the Egyptian History for the sake of the Greeks must be translated into their language ? Nay, is it not evident from Herodotus and Diodorus, that the Grecians were not permitted so much as any commerce with the Egyptians, till the time of Psammetichus, which fell out in the 26. Dynasty of Manetho, and about a Century after the beginning of the Olympiads ? We see then how credible an Author Manetho is, and what truth there is like to be in the account of ancient times, given by the Egyptian Historians, when the chief of them to lamentably and ominously stumbles in his very entrance into it.

Herold. l. 2.
Diod. l.
c. 67.

§. 12.

And yet as fabulous as this account is, which Manetho gives of his taking his history from these pillars before the Flood, I cannot but think that Josephus, an Author otherwise of good credit, took his famous story of Seths pillars concerning Astronomical observations before the flood, from this story of Manetho ; and therefore I cannot but look upon them with as jealous an eye as on the other, although I know how fond the world hath been upon that most ancient monument, as is pretended, of learning in the world. Du Bartas hath writ a whole Poem on these pillars ; and the truth is, they are fitter subjects for Poets than any else, as will appear on these considerations. First, how strangely improbable is it, that the posterity of Seth, who, as is pretended, did foreknow a destruction of the world to be by a flood, should busie themselves to write Astronomical observations on pillars, for the benefit of those who should live after it ? Could they think their pillars should have some peculiar exemption above stronger structures, from the violence of the rough and furious waters ? If they believed the flood absolutely universal, for whom did

did they intend their *observations* ? if not, to what end did they make them, when the persons surviving might *communicate* their inventions to them ? But *secondly*, if either one or both these *pillars* remained, whence comes it to pass that neither the *Chaldeans*, or any of the eldest pretenders to *Astronomy*, should neither mention them, nor make any use of them ? Nay *thirdly*, whence came the *study of Astronomy* to be so lamentably *defective* in those ancient times, if they had such certain *observations* of the *heavenly bodies* gathered by so much experience of the persons who lived before the Flood ? *Fourthly*, how comes *Josephus* himself to neglect this remarkable testimony of the truth of *Scripture-history* in his books against *Apion*, if he had thought it were such as might be relied on ? *Fifthly*, how comes *Josephus* so carelessly to set down the place in *Syria* where these pillars stood, that inquisitive persons might have satisfied themselves with the sight of the pillars at least, and what kind of *Characters* those *observations* were preserved in ? But now, if we compare this of *Josephus* with *Manetho* his story, we shall find them so exactly resemble each other, that we may well judge all those *pillars* to have been taken out of the same *quarry*. Two things make it yet more probable : *First*, the name of the place wherein they stood, which *Eusebius* in *Hexameron* takes out of *Josephus*, and calls *Σεπιδδω* the very same place with that in *Manetho*. The other is the common use of the name of *Seth* among the *Egyptians*, as not only appears by *Plutarch* de *Iside & Osiride*, but by this very place of *Manetho* ; where it follows *επι βασιλεως Σαθως*, a book of his bearing the title which *Vettius Valens Antiochenus*, tel's us is not called *Σαθω*s but *Σαθ*. Now therefore *Josephus*, who frequently useth the *Testimony* of *Heathen Writers*, and frequently of this *Manetho*, endeavoured to bring this fabulous relation of *Manetho* as near the truth as he could ; therefore in stead of *Thoytb* he puts *Seth*, and the fabulous history of *Egypt*, the inventions of the *Patriarchs*, and *Syria* in stead of *Seridica*, a Country too large to find these pillars in.

CHAP. III.

Of the Chaldean History.

The contest of Antiquity among Heathen Nations, and the ways of deciding it. Of the Chaldean Astrology, and the foundation of Judicial Astrology. Of the Zabu, their Founder, who they were, no other then the old Chaldees. Of Berofus and his History. An account of the fabulous Dynasties of Berofus and Manetho. From the Translation of the Scripture history into Greek in the time of Ptolemy. Of that translation and the time of it. Of Demetrius Phalerius. Scaligers arguments answered. Manetho writ after the Septuagint, proved against Kircher; his arguments answered. Of Rabbinical and Arabick Authors, and their little credit in matter of history. The time of Berofus enquired into, his writing co-temporary with Philadelphus.

§. I.

THE next whom our enquiry leads us to, are the *Chaldeans*, a Nation of great and undoubted Antiquity, being in probability the first formed into a National Government after the Flood, and therefore the more capable of having these Arts and Sciences flourish among them, which might preserve the memory of eldest times to the view of posterity. And yet even among these who enjoyed all the advantages of ease, quiet, and a flourishing Empire, we find no undoubted or credible records preserved, but the same vanity as among the *Egyptians*, in arrogating antiquity to themselves beyond all proportion of reason or satisfaction from their own history, to fill up that vast measure of time with, which makes it most probable what *Diodorus* observes of them, that in things pertaining to their arts they made use of Lunar years of 30 days; so they had need, when *Tully* tells us that they boasted of observations of the Stars for 470000 years, which after *Diodorus* his computation, and the vulgar account of years from the beginning of the world, will

Biblioth.

l. 1.

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will fall near upon, if not *before* the *Creation*. It had been *impossible* for them to have been so *extravagant* in their *accounts* of themselves, had they but *preserved* the *history* of their *Nation* in any certain *records*. For want of which, the *tradition* of the *eldest times*, varying in the several *families* after their *dispersion*, and being gradually *corrupted* by the *policy* of their *Leaders*, and those *corruptions* readily embraced by the *predominancy* of *self love* in the several *Nations*, thence arose those *vain* and *eager contests* between the *Chaldeans*, *Scythians*, *Egyptians*, and *Ethiopians*, concerning the *antiquity* of their several *Nations*: which may be seen in *Diodorus*, and others: by which it most evidently appears that they had no certain *history* of their own *Nations*: for none of them insist upon any *records*, but only upon several *probabilities* from the *nature* of their *Country*, and the *Climates* they lived under. Neither need *Psammeticus* have been put to that ridiculous way of deciding the *controversie* by his two *infants* bred up without any *converse* with men, concluding the *language* they spake would manifest the great *antiquity* of the *Nation* it belonged to: Whereas it is more then *probable* they had spoken none at all, had they not *learned* the *inarticulate voice* of the *goats* they had more *converse* with then *men*. The making *use* of such ways to decide this *controversie* doth not only argue the great *weakness* of those times as to *natural knowledge*; but the absolute *defect* and *insufficiency* of them, as to the giving any certain *account* of the *state* of ancient times.

Of which the *Chaldeans* had *advantages* above all other *Heathen Nations*, not only living in a settled *Country*, but in or near that very place where the grand *Ancestors* of the world had their chief *abode* and *residency*. Whereby we see how *unfaithful* a thing *tradition* is, and how soon it is *corrupted* or *fails*, where it hath no sure *records* to *bottom* its self upon. But indeed it is the less wonder that there should be a *confusion* of *histories*, where there had been before of *tongues*; and that such whole *design* and *memory* God had *blasted* before, should afterwards forget their own *original*. But as if the *Chaldeans*

§. 2.

had retained something still of their old aspiring mind to reach up to heaven, the only thing they were eminent for, and which they were careful in preserving of, was some *Astronomical observations*, which *Tully* tells us they had a great conveniency for, by the reason of the plain and even situation of their Country; whereby they might have a larger prospect of the heavenly bodies, than those who lived in mountainous Countries could have. And yet even for this (which they were so famous for, that the name *Chaldeans* passed for *Astrologers* in the Roman Empire) we have no very great reason to admire their excellency in it, considering how soon their skill in *Astronomy* dwindled into that which by a great *Catachresis* is called *judicial Astrology*. The original of which is most evident among them, as all other *Heathen Nations*, to have been from the *Divinity* which they attributed to the Stars; in which yet they were far more rational than those who now admire that Art: For, granting their hypothesis, that the Stars were Gods, it was but reasonable they should determine contingent effects; but it is far from being so with them who take away the foundation of all those celestial houses, and yet attribute the same effects to them, which they did, who believed a *Divinity* in them. The *Chaldeans*, as *Diodorus* relates, set 30 Stars under the Planets; these they called *Sudarius* deis; others they had as *Princes* over these, which they called *ἄστρον οὐρανίου*; the former were as the privy Counsellors, and these the *Princes* over them, by whom in their courses they supposed the course of the year to be regulated. We see then what a near affinity there was between *Astrology* and the *Divinity* of the Stars, which makes

Tetrab. l. 2. *Ptolemy* call them *Atheists* who condemned *Astrology*, because thereby they destroyed the main of their Religion, which was the worshipping the Stars for Gods. But it seems

Georg. l. 16 by *Strabo*, that one of the *Sects* of the *Chaldeans* did so hold to *Astronomy* still, that they wholly rejected *Genealogical*, which caused a great division among the *Orchœni* and the *Borsippeni*, two *Sects* among them, so called from the places of their habitations.

And

And if we reckon the *Zabii* among the *Chaldeans* as §. 3. *Maimonides* seems to do, we have a further evidence of the *Planetary Deities* so much in request among the *Chaldeans*; *Mose* *Ne-* for, the description he gives of them is to this purpose, *vach* p. 3. *that they had no other gods but the Stars to whom they made* c. 29. *statues and images, to the Sun golden, to the Moon silver, and so to the rest of the Planets of the metals dedicated to them. Those images derived an influence from the Stars to which they were erected, which had thence a faculty of foretelling future things; which is an exact description of the* *τολμα* *or Talis-* v. *Scaliger* *mans* so much in request among the *heathens*; such as the *ep. ad Ca-* *Palladium* of *Troy* is supposed by learned men to have been. *faub. et ep.* These *Talisman*s are by the *Jews* called *Dauids backlers*, and *Gallie. Seld-* are much of the same nature with the ancient *Teraphim*. *den. de Div* both being accurately made according to the positions of the *Syr. l. 1.* heavens; only, the one were to foretell future things, the *c. 2.* other for the driving away some calamity. Concerning *Salmas. de* these *Zabii* *Maimonides* tells us, that the understanding their *An. Climas.* *rites* would give a great deal of light to several passages of *p. 578.* *Scripture* which now lie in obscurity; but little is supposed to be yet further known of them than what *Scaliger* hath said, that they were the more *Eastern Chaldeans*, which he fetcheth from the signification of the word; several of their books are extant saith *Scaliger*, among the *Arabians*, but none of them are yet discovered to the *European* world. *Salmasius* thinks these *Zabii* were the *Chaldeans* inhabiting *Mesopotamia*, to which it is very consonant which *Maimonides* saith, that *Abraham* had his education among them. *Said* *De jure* *Barcides* cited by *Mr. Selden*, attributes the original of their *nat. et gen.* religion to the time of *Nabor*, and to *Zarauchath* the *Persian* as *l. 2* c. 7. the Author of it, who is conceived to be the same with *Zoroaster*, who in all probability is the same with the *Zertost* of the *Persees*, a Sect of the ancient *Persians* living now among the *Banyans* in the *Indies*. These give a more full and exact account concerning the original, birth, education, and *Enthusiasmes*, or *Revelations* of their *Zertost* then any we meet with in any *Greek historians*; three books they tell us of which *Zertost* received by *Revelation*, or rather one book, consisting of three several tracts, whereof the first

was concerning judicial *Astrology*, which they call *Astodeger*; the second concerning *Physick* or the knowledge of *natural things*; the third was called *Zertooft* from the bringer of it, containing their religious rites; the first was committed to the *Jesephs* or *Magies*, the second to *Physicians*, the third to the *Darrees* or *Church-men*, wherein are contained the several precepts of their Law; we have likewise the rites and customs of these *Perses* in their worship of fire, with many other particular rites of theirs published sometime since by one Mr. *Lord*, who was a long time resident among them at *Surrat*; by which we may not only understand much of the religion of the ancient *Persians*, but if I mistake not, somewhat of the *Zabii* too. My reasons are, because the ancient *Zaradeha* or *Zoroaster* is by *Said Batricides* made the Author of the *Zabii* as we have seen already, who was undoubtedly the founder of the *Persian worship*, or rather a promoter of it among the *Persians*; For *Ammianus*

Hist. l. 23. *Marcellinus* tells us that he was instructed in the rites of the *Chaldeans* which he added to the *Persian rites*; besides, their agreement in the chief point of *Idolatry*, the worship of the *Sun*, and consequently the *πυρὰ* or *Symbol of the Sun*, the *eternal fire*, is evident; which as far as we can learn, was the great and most early *Idolatry* of the Eastern Countries; and further we find God in *Leviticus* 26. 30. threatening to destroy their *חמם* their *Images of the Sun*, some render it; but most probably by that word is meant the *πυρὰ* the *hearths* where they kept their perpetual fire, for those are *חמם* from *חם* which is used both for the *Sun* and *Fire*.
 Now hence it appears that this *Idolatry* was in use among the Nations about *Palestine*; else there had been no need of so severe a threatening against it, and therefore most probably the rites of the *Zabii* (which must help us to explain the reasons of some particular positive precepts in the *Levitical Law* relating to *Idolatry*) are the same with the rites of the *Chaldeans* and *Persians*, who all agreed in this worship of the *Sun* and *Fire*; which may be yet more probable from what *Maimonides* saith of them, that *Gens Zabæa erat gens que implevis totum orbem*; it could not be then any obscure Nation, but such as had the largest spread in the
 Eastern

v. Voss.

Idol. l. 2. c. 9

Eastern Countries, which could be no other then the ancient *Chaldeans* from whom the *Persians* derived their worship. It may not seem altogether improbable that *Balaam* the famous *Southsayer* was one of these *Zabii*, especially if according to *Salmasius* his judgement they inhabited *Mesopotamia*; for *Balaams* Country seems to be there; for it is said, *Numb. 22. 5. that he dwelt in Pethor by the river, i. e. saith the Chaldee Paraphrast, in Pecor of Syria by Euphrates*, which in Scripture is called *the river*, *Elay 8. 7.* But from this great obscurity as to the history of so ancient and so large a people as these *Zabii* are supposed to be, we have a further evidence to our purpose of the defect veels and insufficiency of the Eastern histories as to the giving any full account of themselves and their own original.

We are told indeed by some, that *Nabonassar* did burn and destroy all the ancient records of the *Chaldeans* which they had diligently preserved amongst them before, on purpose to raise the greater reputation to himself, and blot out the memory of his usurpation, by burning the records of all their own ancient Kings. Which is a conceit I suppose hath no other ground then that the famous *Era* so much celebrated by *Astronomers* and others, did bear the name of *Nabonassar*. Which (if we should be so greedy of all empty conjectures which tend to our purpose as to take them for truths) would be a very strong evidence of the falshood and vanity of the *Chaldeans* in their great pretences to antiquity. But as the case stands in reference to their history we finde more evidence from Scripture to assert their just antiquity, then ever they are able to produce out of any undoubted records of their own. Which yet hath been endeavoured by an Author both of some credit and antiquity, the true *Berosus*, not the counterfeit of *Annius*, whose vizard we shall have occasion to pull off afterwards. This *Berosus* was as *Josephus* and *Tatianus* assure us, a Priest of *Belus*, and a *Babylonian* born, but afterwards flourished in the Isle of *Co*, and was the first who brought the *Chaldean Astrology* in request among the *Greeks*; in honour to whose name and memory, the *Athenians* (who were never backward in applauding those who brought them the greatest news, especially if

§. 4.

C. Appl. 22.
C. Gracors.

suisable

suisable to their former *superstition*) erected a statue for him with a gilded tongue. A good emblem of his history which made a fair and specious shew, but was not that within, which it pretended to be; especially where he pretends to give an account of the most ancient times, and reckons up his two Dynasties before the time of Belus: but of them afterwards. It cannot be denied but some fragments of his history which have been preserved from ruine by the care and industry of *Josephus, Tatianus, Eusebius* and others, have been very useful, not only for proving the truth of the history of Scripture to the heathens; but also for illustrating some passages concerning the Babylonian Empire: as making *Nabopolassar* the Father of *Nebuchadonosor*, of which *Scaliger* hath fully spoken in his notes upon his fragments.

Append. ad
I de Emend.
Temp.

§. 5. Far be it from me to derogate any thing even from prophane histories, where they do not enterfere with the Sacred history of Scripture; and it is certainly the best improvement of these to make them draw water to the Sanctuary, and to serve as smaller Stars to conduct us in our way, when we cannot enjoy the benefit of that greater light of Sacred history. But that which I impeach these prophane histories of, is only an insufficiency as to that account of antient times, wherein they are so far from giving light to Sacred Records, that the design of setting of them up, seems to be for casting a cloud upon them. Which may seem somewhat the more probable in that those monstrous accounts of the Egyptian and Chaldean Dynasties did never publickly appear in the world in the Greek tongue, till the time that our Sacred records were translated into Greek at Alexandria. For till that time when this authentick history of the world was drawn forth from its privacy and retirement, (being as it were locked up before among the Israelites at *Judaea*) into the publick notice of the world about the time of *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, these vain pretenders to antiquity thought not themselves so much concerned to stand up for the credit of their own Nations. For till that time the credulous world not being acquainted with any certain report of the creation and propagation of the world, was apt to swallow any thing that was given forth by those who were had in so great esteem

esteem as the *Chaldean* and *Egyptian Priests* were: Because it was supposed that those persons who were freed from other avocations, had more leisure to inquire into these things, and because of their mysterious hiding what they had from the vulgar, were presumed to have a great deal more than they had. But now when the Sun of righteousness was approaching this Horizon of the world, and in order to that the Sacred history like the day star was to give the world notice of it, by which the former shadows and mists began to fly away, it concerned all those whose interest lay in the former ignorance of mankind, as much as they could to raise all their ignes fatui and whatever might tend to obscure that approaching light by invalidating the credit of that which came to bespeak its acceptance.

It is very observable to consider what gradations and steps there were in the world to the appearance of that grand light which came down from heaven to direct us in our way thither; how the world not long before was awakened into a greater inquisitiveness than ever before, how knowledge grew into repute, and what methods divine providence used to give the inquisitive world a taste of Truth at present to stay their stomachs, and prepare them for that further discovery of it afterwards. In order to this that Nation of the Jews which was an inclosed garden before, was now thrown open; and many of the planets removed and set in forrain Countries, not only in Babylon (where even after their return were left three famous Schools of learning, Sora, Pumbeditha, and Neharda) but in Egypt too, where multitudes of them by Alexanders favour were settled at Alexandria, where they had opportunity to season those two great fountains, whence the current of knowledge ran into the rest of the world. And now it was not in Jewry only that God was known, but he whose name was great in Israel, did make way for the knowledge of himself among all the Nations of the earth. And that allwise God who directed the Magi by a star to Christ, making use of their former skill in Astronomy to take notice of that star which came now on a peculiar errand to them to lead them to their Saviour (The great God condescending so far to mankind, as to take advantage of

§. 6.

of particular inclinations, and to accommodate himself to them, for which purpose it is very observable that he appeared in another way to the *Wise men* then to the *poor Shepherds*) the same God made use of the *curiosity* and *inquisitiveness* after knowledge which was in *Ptolomæus Philadelphus* (which he is so much applauded for by *Athenæum* and others) to bring to light the most advantageous knowledge which the world ever had before the coming of Christ in the flesh. And that great *Library* of his erecting at *Alexandria* did never deserve that title till it had lodged those *Sacred records*, and then it did far better then the old one of *Osymanduas*, of which *Historians* tell us this was the *Inscription* *Ἰαγείον ψυχῶν*. *The shop of the souls Physick*.

V. Casaub.
ad. in Athe-
neum l. 5.
cap. 9.

§. 7.

But this being a matter of so much concernment in order to our better understanding the original of these *vast accounts of time* among the *Chaldeans* and *Egyptians*, and a subject not yet touched by any, we shall a little further improve the probability of it, by taking a more particular account of the time when the *Scriptures* were first translated, and the occasion might thereby be given to these *Egyptians* and *Chaldeans* to produce their *fabulous account* into the view of the world. Whether the *Scriptures* had been ever before translated into the *Greek language*, (though it be asserted by some antient writers of the *Church*,) is very questionable, chiefly upon this account, that a sufficient reason cannot be assigned of undertaking a new translation at *Alexandria* if there had been any extant before. Especially if all those circumstances of that translation be true which are commonly received and delivered down to us with almost an *unanimous consent* of the persons who had greater advantages of knowing the certainty of such things, then we can have at this great distance of time. And therefore certainly every petty conjecture of some modern though learned men, ought not to bear sway against so unanimous a tradition in a matter of fact, which cannot be capable of being proved but by the testimony of former ages. And it is somewhat strange that the single testimony of one *Hermippus* in *Diogenes Laertius* (whose age and authority is somewhat doubtful) concerning only one particular referring to

Vit. Diome-
trii.

Demetrius

Demetrius Phalerens, should be thought of force enough among persons of judgement as well as learning, to infringe the credibility of the whole story delivered with so much consent, not only by *Christian*, but *Jewish Writers*; the testimony of one of which (every whit as considerable as *Apud Eu- Hermippus*) viz. *Aristobulus Judæus* a *Peripatetical Philo- scb. prop. sopher* in an Epistle to *Ptolomy Philometor* doth plainly *Evangel. l. 13.* assert that which was so much questioned, concerning *Demetrius Phalerens*.

But whatever the truth of all the particular circumstances be, which I here enquire not after, nor the authority of that *Aristeus* from whom the story is received, nor whether this translation was made by *Jews* sent out of *Judea*, or by *Jews* residing at *Alexandria*, it sufficeth for our purpose that this translation was made before either the *Chaldean Dynasties* of *Berosus*, or the *Egyptian* of *Manetho* were published to the World. In order to which it is necessary to shew in what time this translation was effected; and herein that channel of tradition which conveys the truth of the thing in one certain course, runs not with so even a stream concerning the exact time of it; all indeed agree that it was about the time of *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*, but in what years of his reign, is very dubious. *Joseph Scaliger* who hath troubled *Animad. ad Numb.* the waters so much concerning the particular circumstances *Euseb.* of this translation, yet fully agrees that it was done in the 1734. time of *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*; only he contends with *Africannus* that it should be done in the 132. Olympiad which is in the 33. year of *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*, but *Eusebius* and *Ierom* place it in the very beginning of his reign, which I think is far more probable, and that in the time when *Ptolomæus Philadelphus* reigned with his Father *Ptolomæus Lagi*: for so it is most certain he did for two years before his Fathers death. By which means the great difficulty of *Scaliger* concerning *Demetrius Phalerens* is quite taken off; for *Hermippus* speaks nothing of *Demetrius* his being out of favour with *Philadelphus*, during his Fathers life, but that upon his fathers death, he was banished by him, and dyed in his banishment; so that *Demetrius* might have the oversight of the Library at *Alexandria* and be the *ad Idyl. 17. Tullian l. 16. Euseb. Chn. maining.*

main instrument of promoting this translation, and yet those things be after true which *Hermippus* speaks, viz. when *Ptolomæus Lagi* or *Soter* was now dead. For it stands not to reason, that during his *Fathers* life *Philadelphus* should discover his displeasure against *Demetrius*, it being conceived upon the advice given to his *Father* for preferring the sons of *Arfinoe* to the *Crown*, before the son of *Berenice*. Most likely therefore it is that this translation might be begun by the means of *Demetrius Phaleræus* in the time of *Philadelphus* his reigning with his *Father*, but it may be not finished till after the death of *Soter* when *Philadelphus* reigned alone. And by this now we can perfectly reconcile that difference which is among the *Fathers* concerning the time when this translation was made. For *Irenæus* attributes it to the time of *Ptolomæus Lagi*. *Clemens Alexandrinus* questions whether in the time of *Lagi* or *Philadelphus*; the rest of the *Chorus* carry it for *Philadelphus*; but the words of *Anatolius* in *Eusebius* cast it fully for both; for there speaking of *Aristobolus*, he saith, *he was one of the seventy who interpreted the Scriptures to Ptolomæus Philadelphus and his Father, and dedicated his Commentaries upon the Law to both those Kings. Hac sane omnem scrupulum eximunt*, saith *Vossius* upon producing this testimony, *this puts it out of all doubt*; and to the same purpose speaks the learned *Jesuite Petavius* in his notes on *Epiphanius*.

Hist. Eccl.
l. 7. c. 26.

De hist.
Græc. l. 1.
cap. 12.
Pag. 380.

3. 9.

Having thus far cleared the time when the Translation of the *Scriptures* into *Greek* was made, we shall find our conjecture much strengthened, by comparing this with the age of the fore-mentioned *Historians*, *Manetho* and *Berosus*. *Manetho* we have already made appear to have lived in the time of *Ptolomæus Philadelphus*, and that, saith *Vossius*, after the death of *Soter*. It is evident from what remains of him in *Eusebius* his *Chronica*, that he not only flourished in the time of *Philadelphus*, but writ his history at the special command of *Philadelphus*, as manifestly appears by the remaining *Epistle* of *Manetho* to him, still extant in *Eusebius*. This command of *Philadelphus* might very probably be occasioned upon the view of that account, which

Chr. Græc. p. 6.

the

the *Holy Scriptures*, being then translated into *Greek*, did give of the world, and the propagation of mankind; upon which, we cannot imagine but so inquisitive a person as *Philadelphus* was, would be very earnest to have his curiosity satisfied, as to what the *Egyptian Priests* (who had boasted so much of antiquity) could produce to confront with the *Scriptures*. Whereupon the task was undertaken by this *Manetho* High Priest of *Heliopolis*, whereby those things which the *Egyptian Priests* had to that time kept secret in their *Cloysters*, were now divulged and exposed to the judgement of the learned world; but what satisfaction they were able to give inquisitive minds, as to the main *Controversy*, or matter enquired after, may partly appear by what hath been said of *Manetho* already, and by what shall be spoken of his *Dynasties* afterwards.

But all this will not persuade *Kircher*; for, whatever *Scaliger*, say, what *Manetho* himself says to the contrary, he, with the confidence and learning of a *Jesuite*, affirms, that this *Manetho* is elder then *Alexander the great*. For these are his words, *Frequens apud priscos historicos Dyna Oedip. stiarum Egyptiacarum fit mentio, quarum tamen alium Egypt. authorem non habemus nisi Manethonem Sebennytam, Sacer- To. 1. 57. dotem Egyptium, quem ante tempora Alexandri, quicquid pag 1. c. 9. dicat Scaliger, in Egypto floruisse comperio*. Certainly some more then ordinary evidence may be expected after so confident an affirmation; but whatever that person be in other undertakings, he is as unhappy a person in *Philology*, as any that have pretended so much acquaintance with it. One would think, he that had been twenty years, as he tells us himself, courting the *Egyptian Mysteries* for compassing his *Oedipus*, should have found some better arguments to prove an assertion of this nature, then merely the testimony of *Josephus*, the *Hebrew book Juchasin*, and some *Arabick Writers*, not one of all which do mention the thing they are brought for, viz. that *Manetho* was elder then *Alexander*. All the business is, they quote him as an ancient Writer; but what then? The Author of the Book *Juchasin* was *Abraham Zacuth* a Jew of *Salamanca*, who writ in the year of our Lord 1502. and this book was first

printed at *Constantinople*, 1556. Might not this man then well mention *Manetho* as an ancient Writer, if he flourished above 1600 years before him, in the time of *Prolo-maus Philadelphus*? And what if some *Arabick* Writers mention him? are they of so great antiquity and credit themselves, that it is an evidence *Manetho* lived in *Alexan-ders* time to be praised by them? It would be well if *Kir-cher*, and other learned men, who think the world is grown to so great stupidity, as to believe every thing to be a *femil* which is far fetched, would first assert and vindicate the antiquity and fidelity of their *Arabick* Authors, such as *Gelaldinus*, *Abenephi*, and many others, before they expect we should part with our more authentick Records of *Histo-ry* for those fabulous relation which they are so full fraught withal. Were it here any part of my present business, it were an easie matter so to lay open the ignorance, falsity, and fabulosity of those *Arabians* whom that Author relies so much upon, that he could not be freed from a design to impose upon the world, who makes use of their *Testi-mony* in matters of ancient times without a *Caveat*. I know none fit to believe these *Arabick* Writers as to these things, but those who have faith enough to conceit the *Rabbins* in matter of *History*. Of whom *Origen* saith, *ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἐπιστάμεθα τὴν ἱστορίαν αὐτῶν*. Who are, as *Grotius* truly saith, *pejoribus histeria Magistri*; nam ex quo patria expuls sunt, omnis apud illos historia crassus erroribus & fabulis est inquinata, quibus & proinde nihil credendum est, nisi aliunde testes accederant. And as *Is. Causabon* passeth this sharp, but due censure upon them, *Rabbini ubi de Lingua Hebraica agitur & vocis alienius proprietate, vel aliquo Tal-mudico instituto merito à Christianis tribui non parum; ubi vero à verbis ventitur ad res, aut ad historiam, vel rerum antiquarum veteris populi explicationem, nisi falli & decipi volumus, nihil admodum esse illis fidei habendum. Sexcentis argumentis hoc facile probarem si id nunc egerem.* And in reference to their ancient rites as well as history, *Joseph Scaliger* hath given this verdict of them. *Manifesta est Judaeorum inscitia, qui cum usu veterum rituum, etiam eorum cognitionem amiserunt, & multu qua ad eorum sacra*

C. Celsum
l. 2.

Annot. in
Mat 24 24

Exe cit. ad
Baron. 16.
s. 2.

De Emend.
Temp. l. 6.

& *historiam pertinent, longe melius nos teneamus quam ipsi.* The same which these very learned persons say of Rabbinical, may with as much truth be said of these Arabick Writers, in matters of *ancient history*, which I have here inserted, to shew the reason why I have thought the testimony of either of these two sorts of persons so *inconsiderable* in the matter of our future discourse; which being *historical*, and *that* of the greatest *antiquity*, little relief is to be expected from either of them in order thereto. But to return to Kircher. It is freely granted that *Josephus*, an Author of *credit* and *age*, sufficient to give his opinion in this case, doth very frequently cite *Manetho* in his *Egyptian History*; particularly in his learned Books against *Apion*; but where he doth give the least intimation of *Manetho* being elder then *Alexander*, I am yet to seek. But Kircher will not yet leave the matter so, but undertakes to give an account of the mistake; which is, that there were two *Manetho's* besides, and both *Egyptians*, mentioned by *Suidas*: one a *Mendesian*, who writ of the Preparation of the *Egyptian* *ῥῶσι*, a kind of perfume used by the *Egyptian Priests*. The other a *Diospolitian*, who writ some *Physiological* and *Astronomical* Treatises, whose works he hears are preserved in the *Duke of Florence* his *Library*; and this was he (saith he) who lived in the times of *Augustus*, whom many by the equivocation of the name have confounded with the ancient Writer of the *Egyptian Dynasties*. Is it possible so learned a Jesuite should discover so little judgement in so few words? For first, who ever asserted the Writer of the *Dynasties* to have lived in the time of *Augustus*? Yet secondly, if that *Manetho* whom *Suidas* there speaks of, lived in *Augustus* his time, according to Kircher, then it must necessarily follow, that the Compiler of the *Dynasties* did: for it is evident to any one that looks into *Suidas*, that he there speaks of the same *Manetho*; for these are his words; *Μανέθης ἐκ Διοσπολείας τῆς Ἀγούσης, ἢ Σεβαστίης φυσιολόγος*, &c. Can any thing be more plain then that he hear speaks of *Manetho Sebennyte*, who was the Author of the *Dynasties*, though he might write other things besides, of which *Suidas* there speaks?

speaks? But *Kircher* very wisely, in translating *Suidas* his words, leaves out *Σελευῆς*, which decides the *con-verse*, and makes it clear that he speaks of the same *Manetho*, of whom we have been discoursing. Thus it still appears that this *Manetho* is no elder then the time of *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, which was the thing to be proved.

§. 10.

Now for *Berosus*, although the *Chaldeans* had occasion enough given them before this time, to produce their antiquities by the *Jews* converse with them in *Babylon*; yet we find this Author the first who durst adventure them abroad, such as they were, in *Greek*. Now that this *Berosus* published his history after the time mentioned, I thus prove. *Tatianus Assyrius* tells us that he writ the *Chaldaik history* in three books, and dedicated them to *Antiochus*, τῷ ἁγ. Σέλευκον ἑταίρῳ, as it is read in the fragment of *Tatianus* preserved in

Prap. Evang. h. 10.
p. 289. ed. Rob. Steph.

Ensebius: but it must be acknowledged that in the *Paris edition* of *Tatianus*, as well as the *Basil*, it is thus read, ἁγ. ἁγ. Ἀλέξανδρον ἑταίρῳ, Ἀντόχῳ τῷ μετ' αὐτὸν τεινῷ, here it

relates to the third from *Alexander*, in the other to the third from *Seleucus*; Now if we reckon the third so as to take the person from whom we reckon in, for the first, according to the reading in *Ensebius*, it falls to be *Antiochus* called *Θεός*: according to the other reading it falls to be *Antiochus Soter*; for *Seleucus* succeeded *Alexander* in the Kingdom of *Syria*; *Antiochus Soter*, *Seleucus*; *Antiochus Θεός*,

v. Scaliger de Emenda. Temp. l. 5.
p. 392.

Antiochus Soter. But according to either of these readings, our purpose is sufficiently proved. For *Antiochus Soter* began to reign in *Syria* in the sixth year of *Ptol. Philadelphus* in *Egypt*; *Antiochus Θεός* succeeded him, in the 22. year of *Philadelphus*; now the soonest that the history of *Berosus* could come forth, must be in the reign of *Antiochus Soter*, which according to our accounts is some competent time after the translation of the Scripture into *Greek*; but if it were not till the time of *Antiochus Θεός*, we cannot but imagine that the report of the account of *antient times* in the *Scriptures* was sufficiently divulged before the publishing of this history of *Berosus*; and it may be *Berosus* might somewhat sooner then others understand all transactions at *Alexandria*,

andria, because the place of his chief residence, was where Ptolomy Philadelphus was born, which was in the 1st of Co. De hist. But Vossius goes another way to work to prove the time of *Græc. l. 1.* Berosus, which is this. He quotes it out of Pliny that Bero-^{c. 13.} sus recorded the history of 480 years, which, saith he, ^{Plin. hist. nat. l. 7.} must be reckoned from the era of Nabonasser. Now this began in the second year of the 8. Olympiad, from which time if we reckon 480 years, it falls upon the latter end of Antiochus Soter; and so his history could not come out before the 22. of Ptol. Philadelphus, or very little before. Thus we have made it evident, that these two great historians are younger even then the translation of the Bible into Greek, by which it appears probable that they were provoked to publish their fabulous Dynasties to the world. And so much to shew the insufficiency of the Chaldean history, as to the account of ancient times: Which we shall conclude with the censure of Strabo a grave and judicious Author concerning the antiquities of the Persians, Medes, and Syrians, which ^{Geogr. l. 11.} saith he, have not obtained any great credit in the world, *ὅτι τὴν τ' συγγραφὴν ἀπλότητα καὶ φιλόμυθον*, because of the simplicity and fabulousness of their historians. From hence we see then that there is no great credibility in those histories which are impeached of falshood by the most grave and judicious of heathen writers;

CHAP. IV.

The defect of the Græcian History.

That manifested by three evident arguments of it. 1. The fabulousness of the Poetical age of Greece. The Antiquity of Poetry. Of Orpheus and the ancient Poets. Whence the Poetical Fables borrowed. The advancement of Poetry and Idolatry together in Greece. The different censures of Strabo and Eratosthenes concerning the Poetical age of Greece; and the reasons of them. 2. The eldest Historians of Greece are of suspected credit; Of Damastes, Aristeus, and others; of most of their eldest Historians we have nothing left but their names, of others only the subjects they treated of, and some fragments. 3. Those that are extant, either confess their ignorance of eldest times, or plainly discover it. Of the first sort are Thucydides and Plutarch; several evidences of the Græcians Ignorance of the true original of Nations. Of Herodotus and his mistakes; the Græcians ignorance in Geography discovered, and thence their insufficiency as to an account of ancient history.

§. I. **D**ESCEND we now to the History of Greece; to see whether the *Metropolis of Arts and Learning* can afford us any account of *ancient times*, that may be able to make us in the least question the account given of them in *sacred Scriptures*. We have already manifested the defect of Greece as to *letters and ancient records*, but yet it may be pretended that her *Historians* by the excellency of their *wits* and searching abroad into other Nations, might find a more certain account of *ancient times*, then other Nations could obtain. There is no body, who is any thing acquainted with the *Græcian* humour, but will say they were beholding to their *wits* for most of their Histories; they being some of the earliest writers of *Romances* in the world, if all *fabulous narrations* may bear that name. But laying aside at present all their *Poetical Mythology*, as it concerns their gods, (which we

we may have occasion to enquire into afterwards) we now examine only their *credibility*, where they pretend to be most *historical*. Yet how far they are from meriting belief even in these things, will appear to any that shall consider; First, that their most ancient writers were *Poetical* and apparently *fabulous*. Secondly, That their eldest *Historians* are of suspected credit even among themselves. Thirdly, That their best *Historians* either discover or confess abundance of ignorance as to the *history* of ancient times. First, That their first writers were *Poetical*, and apparently *fabulous*: *Strabo* undertakes to prove that *Prose* is only an imitation of *Poetry*, and so *Poetry* must needs be first written. For, saith he, at first *Poetry* was only in request; afterwards in imitation of that, *Cadmus*, *Pherecydes* and *Hecataeus* writ their histories, observing all other laws of *Poetry*, but only the measures of it; *Geogr. l. 1.* but by degrees writers began to take greater liberty, and so brought it down from that lofty strain it was then in, to the form now in use: as the *Comical* strain is nothing else but a depressing the sublimer style of *Tragedies*. This he proves because *ᾠδὴν* did antiently signify the same with *ᾠδὴ*; for *Poems* were only *λόγοι μεμελισμένοι*, Lessons fit to be sung among them; thence, saith he, is the original of the *ᾠδὴ*, &c. For these werethose *Poems* which were sung *ἐν ᾠδῇ* when they held a branch of laurel in their hands, as *Plutarch* tells us they were wont to do *Homers Iliads*, *Sympos.* that were sung to the *Harp* as *Hesiods ᾠδὴ*: besides, saith *Strabo*, that *Prose* is called *ἡ μέλις λόγος*; argues that it is only a bringing down of the higher strain in use before. But however this were in general, as to the *Gracians*, it is evident that *Poetry* was first in use among them; for in their elder times when they first began to creep out of *Barbarism*, all the *Philosophie* and instruction they had, was from their *Poets*, and was all couched in verse; which *Plutarch* not only confirms, but particularly instanceth in *Orpheus*, *Hesiod*, *Parmenides*, *Xenophanes*, *Empedocles* and *Thales*; and hence *Horace de arte Poetica* of the ancient *Poets* before *Homer*, *De Pyth. Oiac.*

—fuit hac sapientia quondam
Publica privata secernere, sacra profana:

I

Concubium

*Concubitu prohibere vago : dare jura maritis :
Oppida moliri : leges incidere ligno,
Sic honor & nomen divinis vatibus atque
Carminibus venit.*

Dissert. in From hence as *Heinsius* observes, the *Poets* were antiently
Hef. cap. 6. called *ἱδούρχοι* : and the antient speeches of the *Philoso-*
phers containing matters of *morality* were called *ἀσuarα* &
ἀδιδουα, of which many are mentioned in their *lives* by *Dio-*
genes Laertius ; in the same sense were *Carmina* antiently
used among the *Latins* for precepts of *morality*, as in that
Quest. collection of them, which goes under the name of *Cato*,
Rom. cap. (which some think to be an antient piece; but with a false
14. inscription; but *Boxhornius* thinks it to be of some *Chri-*
stians doing in the decay of the *Roman Empire*) *Si Deus est*
animus, nobis ut Carmina dicunt. Carmina, saith *Heinsius*, i. e.
dicta Philosophorum; *causa est, quia dicta illa breviter, quibus*
sententias suas de Deo deque reliquis includebant, ἀδιδουα *dis-*
cabant, i. e. *Carmina*.

§. 2. When Poetry came first into request among the *Gracians*,
is somewhat uncertain; but this is plain and evident that the
intention of it was not merely for instruction, but as *Strabo*
expresseth it, *ἡναγώγειν & παραινέειν τὰ πάλιν*, the more
gently, to draw the people on to *Idolatri*. For as he saith, it is
impossible to persuade women and the promiscuous multitude
to religion by meer dry reason or *Philosophy*, *ἀλλὰ δὲ & δι*
ἡδονῆς καὶ τῆς αἰσθητικῆς *ἐν τῇ αἰσθητικῇ καὶ πικτικῇ* : but for
this, saith he, there is need of *superstition*, and this cannot be
advanced without some fables and wonders. For, saith he, the
Thunderbolts, Shields, Tridents, Serpents, Spears attributed to
the gods are meer fables, and so is all the antient *Theology*;
but the *Governours* of the *Common-wealth* made use of these
things, the better to awe the silly multitude, and so bring them
into better order. I cannot tell how far this might be their
end, since these things were not brought in so much by the
several *Magistrates*, as by the endeavour of particular men,
who thought to raise up their own esteem among the vul-
gar by such things, and were employed by the great deceivers
of the world as his grand instruments to advance *Idolatri*

Geogr. l. 1.
p. 13.

in it. For which we are to consider, that although there were gross *Ignorance*, and consequently *Superstition* enough in *Greece* before the *Poetick* age of it, yet their *Superstitions* and *Idolatrous* worship was not so *licked* and brought into *form*, as about the time of *Orpheus*, from whom the *Poetick* age commenceth; who was as great an *instrument* of setting up *Idolatry*, as *Apollonius* was afterwards of restoring it, being both persons of the highest esteem and veneration among the *heathen*. Much about the same time did those live in the world who were the first great promoters of *Superstition* and *Poetry*; as *Melampus*, *Musæus*, *Arion*, *Methymnaus*, *Amphion* of *Thebes*, and *Enmolpus* *Thrax*, none of whom were very far distant from the time of *Orpheus*. Of whom *Clemens Alexandrinus* thus speaks, *οὐκ ἔστιν μουσικῆς λυσιτελεῖναι τὴν βίον ἐν τῷ χρόνῳ τῆς γούρνιας*—*Protreptic.*
τὸν ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῷ εἶδεναι χρεωγῶντος πρὸς τὴν. *These under P. 31*

a pretence of *Musick* and *Poetry* corrupting the lives of men, did by a kind of artificial *Magick* draw them out to the practice of *Idolatry*. For the novelty and pleasingness of *Musick* and *Poetry* did presently insinuate its self into the minds of men, and thereby drew them to a venerable esteem both of the persons and practises of those who were the Authors of them. So *Conon* in *Photius* tells us that *Orpheus* was exceedingly acceptable to the people for his skill in *Musick*; which the *Thracians* and *Macedonians* were much delighted with: From which arose the *Fable* of his drawing trees and wild beasts after him, because his *Musick* had so great an influence upon the civilizing that people, who were almost grown rude through *Ignorance* and *Barbarism*: and so *Horace* explains it,

*Sylvestres homines sacer, interpretisque Deorum
 Cadibus & victu fando deterrenit Orpheus,
 Diffus ob hoc lenire Tigres rapidoque Leones.*

*Ep. ad
 Pison.*

This *Orpheus* by *Mythologists* is usually called the son of *Calliope*, but may with better reason be called the father of the whole *Chorus* of the *Muses*, then the son of one of them, since *Pindar* calls him *πατὴρ ἀοιδῶν*, and *John Tzetzes* tells

Scho'. in Hesiod. p. 8. us he was called the Son of Calliope *ὡς καλλιόχης ποινῆς* *ἐννοεῖται ὅτι ὁμιλῶν τῆς αἰς τοῦ Διὸς*, as the inventor of Poetical elegance, and the sacred hymns which were made to the gods. (which the old Romans called *Assamenta*); and Justin

Parenef. 1. Martyr calls him *τὸ πολυθεῖον πρῶτον διδάσκαλον*, the first teacher of Polytheism and Idolatry.

§. 3. For this Orpheus having been in Egypt, as Pausanias, Paus. E- Diodorus, and Artapanus in Eusebius all confess, he liac. 2. brought from thence most of the Magical rites and super- Diod bibl. stitious customs in use there, and set them up among the lib. 1. Gracians; so Diodorus acknowledgeth in the same place, Euseb. and it is likewise evident by what Aristophanes saith in Prap. l. 10 his *βατράχοι*,

All. 4. sc. 2.

Ὀρφεὺς ὡς τὸ τελετὴς ὅτι ἡμῖν ἐπέδωκε, φῶτον τὸ ἀπὸ χερσὶν.

Orpheus first instructed them in the sacred mysteries, and to abstain from slaughter: which is to be understood of the *βδυσμα*, the killing of beasts in sacrifice, which probably was in use among them before as a remainder of ancient tradition, till Orpheus brought his Egyptian doctrine into request among them. The mysteries of Osiris, saith Diodorus, were transplanted into Greece under the name of Dionysism or Bacchus, and Isis under Ceres or Magna Mater, and the punishment and pleasures after this life from the rites of sepulture among them; Charons waiving of sou's from the lake Acherusia in Egypt, over which they were wont to send the dead bodies. Pausanias tells us, that the Spartans derived the worship of Ceres Chthonia from Orpheus, and the Aeginata the worship of Hecate. Besides which he instituted new rites and mysteries of his own, in which the initiated were called *Ὀρφεῖται*, and required a most solemn oath from all of them never to divulge them, which was after observed in all those prophane mysteries which in imitation of these were set up among the Greeks. Strabo thinks the mysteries of Orpheus were in imitation of the old Cotyitian and Benedidian mysteries among the Thracians; but Herodotus with more probability parallels them and the Dionysian

Lacon. p. 95. Corinth. p. 72. V.C. Rhod. Ant. Lect. l. 15. p. 9.

Geogr. lib. 10.

Dionysian with the *Egyptian*, from which we have already seen that *Orpheus* derived his; who is conceived by *Georgius Cedrenus* and *Timothæus* in *Eusebius*, to have lived about the time of *Gideon* the judge of *Israel*; but there is too great confusion concerning his age, to define any thing certainly about it. Which ariseth most from the several persons going under his name, of which besides this were in all probability two more; the one an *Heroick Poet*, called by *Suidas* *Ciconæus*, or *Arcas*, who lived two Ages before *Homer*, and he that goes under the name of *Orpheus*, whose *Hymns* are still extant, but are truly ascribed to *Onomacritus* the *Athenian*, by *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Tatianus*, *Affyrinus*, *Suidas*, and others, who flourished in the times of the *Pisistratide* at *Athens*. We are like then to have little relief for finding out of truth in the *Poetick Age* of *Greece*, when the main design of the *Learning* then used was only to insinuate the belief of *Fables* into the people, and by that to awe them into *Idolatry*.

If we come lower down to the succeeding *Poets*, we may find *Fables* increasing still in the times of *Homer*, *Hesiod*, and the rest, which made *Eratoſthenes*, a person of great judgement and *Learning* (whence he was called after *Plato*, and *μυροβλάτης*, and *τὸ κῆρυξ*, because he carried, if not the first, yet the second place in all kind of Literature) condemn the ancient *Poetry* as *ἡρώδης μυροβλάτης*, a company of old wives tales, which were invented for nothing but to please silly people, and had no real learning or truth at all in them. For this, though he be sharply censured by *Sirabo* in his first Book, who undertakes to vindicate the *Geography* of *Homer* from the exceptions of *Eratoſthenes*; yet himself cannot but confess that there is a very great mixture of *Fables* in all their *Poets*, which is, saith he, partly to delight the people, and partly to awe them. For the minds of men being alwayes desirous of novelties, such things do hugely please the natural humours of weak people, especially if there be something in them that is *θαυμάσιον ἢ τρομακτικόν*, very strange and wonderful, it increaseth the delight in hearing it; *ὅτι οὐκ εἰς τὸ μαρτυρεῖν εἰσέρχεται*, which draws them on to a desire of hearing more of it. And

§. 4.

by this means, saith he, are children first brought on to learning, and all ignorant persons are kept in awe; nay, and the more learned themselves (partly for want of reason and judgement, and partly from the remainder of those impressions which these things made upon them when they were children) cannot shake off that former credulity which they had as to these things. By which discourse of Strabo, though intended wholly by him in vindication of Poetical Fables, it is plain and evident what great disservice hath been done to truth by them, by reason they had no other Records to preserve their ancient history but these fabulous Writers, and therefore supposing a mixture of truth and falsehood together, which Strabo contends for; yet what way should be taken to distinguish the true from the false, when they had no other certain Records? and besides, he himself acknowledgeth how hard a matter it is even for wise men to excuse those fabulous narrations out of their minds, which were insinuated into them by all the advantages which prejudice, custom, and education could work upon them. Granting then there may be some truth at the bottom of their fabulous narrations,

Odys. 3.

"Οἱ δ' ἐν τῇ χερσὶν ἀνέχουσιν ἀγέλαον ἀνδρῶν.

Which may be gilded over with some pleasant tales, as himself compares it; yet how shall those come to know that it is only gilded, that never saw any pure metal, and did alwayes believe that it was what it seemed to be. Had there been any *κεντήριον*, or touchstone to have differenced between the one and the other, there might have been some way for a separation of them; but there being none such, we must conclude, that the fabulous Narrations of Poets in stead of making Truth more pleasant by their fictions, have so adulterated it, that we cannot find any credibility at all in their narrations of elder times, where the truth of the story hath had no other way of conveyance but through their fictions.

9. 5.

But though Poets may be allowed their liberty for representing things to the greatest advantage to the palates of their Readers, yet we may justly expect, when men pro-

profess to be *historical*, they should deliver us nothing but what upon strictest examination may prove undoubted truth. Yet even this were the *Greeks* far from; for *Strabo* himself confesseth of their eldest *Historians*; *Kai oi aetoi i ispeidi e pounoi puthoexoi*, their first *Historians* both of persons and things were *fabulous*. *Diodorus* particularly instanceth in their eldest *Historians*, as *Cadmus*, *Milesius*, *Hecataeus*, and *Hellanicus*, and condemns them for *fabulousness*. *Strabo* condemns *Damastes Sigeensis* for *vanity* and *falsehood*, and wonders at *Erastosthenis* for making use of him; yet this man is of great antiquity among them, and his testimony used by Authors of good credit; as *Di-onyf. Halycarnassensis*, *Plutarch*, and others. Nay *Pliny* professeth to follow him, and so doth *Aristens Proconnesius*, in his *Arimaspsia*, which may render the credit of his History very suspicious; with whom it was a sufficient ground of credibility to any story, that he found it in some *Greek Authors*. *Strabo* reckons *Damastes* with *Euemerus Messenius* and *Antiphanes Bergens*; which latter was so noted a *liar*, that from him, as *Stephanus* tells us, *βυζαίην* was used as a proverb for to speak never a word of truth. *Aristens Proconnesius* lived in the time of *Cyrus*, and writ a History of the *Arimasps* in three Books, who seems to have been the *Sir John Mandevill* of *Greece*, from his *Stories* of the *Arimasps*, with one eye in their foreheads, and their continual fighting with the *Gryphins* for gold; yet the story was taken upon trust by *Herodotus*, *Pliny*, and many others, though the experience of all who have visited those *Northern Climates*, do sufficiently refute these follies. *Strabo* saith of this *Aristens*, that he was *αυτῷ πῶς ἐν τῷ ἀλλοτρίῳ*, one inferior to none for juggling, which censure was probably occasioned by the common story of him, that he could let his soul out of his body when he pleased, and bring it again; yet this Juggler did *Celsus* pitch on to confront with our blessed *Saviour*, as *Heracles* did on *Apollinus*; so much have those been to seek for reason, who have sought to oppose the doctrine of faith.

But further, what credit can we give to those *Historians* who have striven to confute each other, and lay open

one anothers falshood to the world. Where was there ever any such *dissonancy* in the sacred History of *Scripture*? doth the Writer of one Book discover the weakness of another? do not all the parts so exactly agree, that the most probable suspicion could ever fall into the heart of an *Infidel*, is, that they were all written by the same person, which yet the *series* of times manifests to have been *impossible*. But now if we look into the ancient *Greek* Historians, we need no other testimony then themselves to take away their *credibility*. The *Genealogies* of *Hesiod* are corrected by *Acusiddam*, *Acusiddam* is condemned by *Hellanicus*, *Hellanicus* accused of falshood by *Ephorus*, *Ephorus* by *Timaeus*, *Timaeus* by such who followed him, as *Josephus* fully shews. Where must we then fix our belief? upon all in common? that is the ready way to believe *contradictions*; for they condemn one another of falshood. Must we believe *one*, and reject the *rest*? but what evidence doth that *one* give why he should be credited more then the *rest*? And, which is a most irrefragable argument against the *Gracian history*, their *eldest historians* are acknowledged to be the most *fabulous*; for our only recourse for deciding the controversies among the *younger historians*, must be to the *elder*: And here we are further to seek then ever; for the first ages are *confessed* to be *Poetical*, and to have no certainty of *truth* in them. So that it is impossible to find out any undoubted certainty of ancient times among the *Greek Historians*; which will be yet more evident when we add this, that there are very few extant of those *Historians*, who did carry the greatest name for *Antiquity*.

§. 7.

The highest antiquity of the *Greek Historians* doth not much exceed the time of *Cyrus*, and *Cambyzes*, as *Vossius* hath fully demonstrated in his learned book *De Historicis Gracis*, and therefore I shall spare particular enquiries into their several ages. Only these two things will further clear the insufficiency of the *Greek History*, as to an account of ancient times: first, that of many of these old historians we have nothing left but their meer names without any certainty of what they treated. Such are *Sisypheus Comus*, *Corinnus*, *Engen Samius*;

Samius, Deiochus Proconnesius, Eudemus Parus, Democles Phygaleus, Ameliasageras Chalcedonius, Xnomedes Chius, and several others whose names are recorded by several writers, and listed by *Vossius* among the *Historians*, but no evidence what subject or history was handled by them. Secondly, that of those whose not only memories are preserved, but some evidence of what they writ, we have nothing extant till the time of the Persian war. For all that was writ before, is now consumed by time, and swallowed up in that vast and all devouring Gulf; in which yet their heads still appear above the waters, to tell us what once they informed the world of. It cannot be denied, but if many of those ancient histories were yet remaining, we might probably have some greater light into some matters of fact in the elder times of *Greece*, which now we are wholly to seek for, unless we think to quench our thirst in the muddy waters of some fabulous Poets. For what is now become of the antiquities of *Ionia* and the City *Miletus* written by *Cadmus Milesius*, supposed to be the first writer of History? where lye the *Genealogies* of *Aensilam Argivus*? where is now extant the *History* of the *Gods* written by *Pherecydes Scyrus* *Pythagoras* his *Master*? or the *Chronica* of *Aochilochus* who flourished about the 20 *Olympiads*? or those of *Theagenes Rheginus*? Where may we hope to meet with *Pherecydes Larus* his *Attick antiquities*, or his *Catalogue* of *Cities and Nations*? or *Hecataeus* his description of *Asia*, and some suppose of *Libya* and *Europe* too? or the *Originals* of *Nations* and *founders* of *Cities* written by *Hellanicus*? How may we come by the *Persick*, *Greek* and *Egyptian History* of *Charon Lampfacenus*, the *Lydian History* of *Xanthus Lydius*; the *Samian antiquities* of *Simmias Rhodius*; the *Corinthian History* of *Enmelus Corinthius*; *Panyasis* his *Antiquities* of *Greece*; the *Scythian History* of *Anacharsis*; the *Phrygian* of *Diagoras*, the *Chaldaick* and *Persian* of *Democritus*; the *Sicilian* and *Italian* of *Hippys Rheginus*; the *Telchimiack History* of *Teleclides*? All these are now buried with many more in the rubbish of time, and we have nothing but the meer skeletons of them left, to tell us that once such persons were, and thought themselves concerned

to give the world some account of their being in it. Whereby may be likewise seen the remarkable providence of God concerning the sacred history, which though of far greater antiquity then any of these, hath survived them all, and is still preserved with as much purity and incorruption as a book passing through so many hands was capable of. But of that in its due place.

§. 8.

But yet if the *Greek historians* that are yet extant, were of more undoubted credit then those that are lost, we might easily bear with our losing some old stories, if we gained some authentick history by it accomplished in all its parts: but even this we are far from in the *Greek history*; for the *historians* themselves do either confess their own ignorance of ancient times, or do most palpably discover it, which was the third and last consideration touching the credibility of the *Gracian history*. That most grave and accurate historian *Thucydides*, then whom scarce ever any *Gracian* discovered more an impartial love to the truth in what he writ, doth not only confess but largely prove the impossibility of an exact account to be given of the times preceding the *Peloponnesian war*, in the very entrance into his history: For saith he, the matter preceding that time, cannot now through the length of time be accurately discovered or found out by us. All that he could find in the ancient state of *Greece* was a great deal of Confusion, unquiet stations, frequent removals, continual pyracies and no settled form of Commonwealth. What certain account can be then expected of those times, when a most judicious writer, even of *Athens* its self, acknowledged such a *Chaos* in their ancient history! And *Plutarch* a later author indeed, but scarce behind any of them, if we believe *Tacitus* in *A. Gellius* for learning and prudence, dares not we see venture any further back then the time of *Theseus*; for before that time, as he compares it, as *Geographers* in their maps when they have gone as far as they can, fill up the empty space with some unpassable mountains, or frozen seas, or devouring sands; so those who give an account of elder times are faine to insert *νεβηλὴ καὶ τέρατα*, some wonderful and Tragical stories which as he saith, have neither any truth nor certainty in them. Thus we see those who were best able to judge

udge of the *Greek antiquities*, can find no sure footing to stand on in them; and what *basis* can we find for our *faith* where they could find so little for their *knowledge*? And those who have been more daring and venturous than these persons mentioned, what a *Labyrinth* have they run themselves into, how many *confusions* and *contradictions* have they involved themselves in? sometimes writing the passages of other *Countries* for those of *Greece*, and at other times so confounding times, persons and places, that one might think they had only a design upon the understandings of their readers, to make them play at *Blind-mas-buff* in searching for the *Kings of Greece*.

But as they are so *confused* in their own history, so they are as *Ignorant* and *fabulous* when they dare venture over their own *thresholds* and look abroad into other *Countries*; we certainly owe a great part of the lamentable *ignorance* of the true *original* of most *Nations* to the pitiful account the *Greek* authors have given of them; which have had the fortune to be entertained in the world with so much esteem and veneration, that it hath been thought *learning* enough to be acquainted with the account which they give of *Nations*. Which I doubt not hath been the great reason so many *fabulous* relations not only of *Nations* but *persons* and *several animals* never existing in the world, have met with so much entertainment from the less inquisitive world. The *Greek* writers it is evident, *took up* things upon *trust* as much as any people in the world did, being a very weak and inconsiderable Nation at first, and afterwards the knowledge they had was generally borrowed from other *Nations* which the wise men only suited to the temper of the *Greeks*, and so made it more *fabulous* than it was before. As it was certainly the great defect of the *natural philosophy* of the *Greeks*, (as it hath been ever since in the world) that they were so ready to form *Theories* upon some *principles* or *hypotheses* which they only received by *Tradition* from others, without fetching their *knowledge* from the *experiments* of nature; and to these they *sued* all the *phenomena* of nature, and what was not *suitable*, was rejected as *monstrous* and *Anomalous*: so it was in their *history* wherein they had

§. 2.

some *fabulous hypotheses* they took for granted without enquiring into the *truth* and *certainity* of them, and to these they suit whatever light they gained in after times of the *state* of forraign *Nations*, which ha h made *Truth* and *Antiquity* wrestle so much with the *corruptions* which eat into them through the *pride* and *ignorance* of the *Greeks*. Hence they have alwayes suited the *History* of other *Nations* with the account they give of their own; and where nothing could serve out of their own *History* to give an account of the *original* of other *Nations*, they (who were never backward at *fictions*) have made a *founder* of them suitable to their own language. The truth is, there is nothing in the world useful or beneficial to mankind, but they have made shift to find the *Author* of it among themselves. If we enquire after the *original* of *agriculture*, we are told of *Ceres* and *Triptolemus*; if of *pasturage*, we are told of an *Arcadian Pan*; if of *wine*, we presently hear of a *Liber Pater*; if of *Iron instruments*, then who but *Vulcan*? if of *Musick*, none like to *Apollo*. If we press them then with the *History* of other *Nations*, they are as well provided here: if we enquire an account of *Europe*, *Asia* or *Lybia*; for the *first* we are told a fine story of *Cadmus* his *sister*, for the *second* of *Prometheus* his *Mother* of that name, and for the *third* of a daughter of *Epaphus*. If we are yet so curious as to know the *original* of particular *Countries*; then *Italia* must find its name from a *Calf* of *Hercules*, because *ἰταλῶ* in *Greek* will signifie some such thing; *Sardinia* and *Africa* must be from *Sardus* and *Afer* two sons of *Hercules*; but yet if these will not serve, *Hercules* shall not want for *children* to people the world; for we hear of *Scythes*, *Galatas*, *Lydus*, some other sons of his, that gave names to *Scythia*, *Lydia*, *Galatia*; with the same *probability* that *Media* had its name from *Medea*, and *Spain* and *Lusitania* from *Pan* and *Lusus* two companions of *Bacchus*. If *Persia* want a *founder*, they have one *Persus* an *Argive* ready for it; if *Syria*, *Babylonia* and *Arabia* want reasons of their names, the prodigal *Greeks* will give *Apollo* three sons, *Syrus*, *Babylon* and *Arabs*, rather then they shall be *heretical Accephalists*. This vanity of theirs was *universal*, not confined to any place or age,

age, but as any Nation or people came into their knowledge, their *Gods* were not so decreed, but they might *Father* one son more upon them rather than any Nation should be *filia populi*, and want a *Father*. Only the grave *Athenians* thought scorn to have any *Father* assigned them; their only *ambition* was to be accounted *Aborigines* & *genuini terra*, to be the eldest sons of their *Teeming mother the earth*, and to have been born by the same *equivocal generation* that mice and frogs are from the impregnated slime of the earth. Are we not like to have a wonderful account of ancient times from those who could arrogate to themselves so much knowledge from such slender and thin account of the originals of people which they gave, and would have the world to entertain with the greatest veneration upon their naked words? Have we not indeed great reason to hearken to those who did so frequently discover their affection to Fables, and manifest their ignorance when ever they venture upon the History of other Nations?

The truth is, *Herodotus* himself (whom *Tully* calls the *Father of History*, which title he deserves at least in regard of antiquity, being the eldest of the extant *Greek Historians*) hath stood in need of his *Compurgators*, who yet have not been able to acquit him of *fabulousness*, but have sought to make good his credit by *recrimination*, or by making it appear that *Herodotus* did not fully believe the stories he tells, but took them upon trust himself and so delivers them to the world. Some impute it to the *ingenuity* of *Herodotus*, that he calls his books of History by the name of the *Muses* on purpose to tell his readers they must not look for meer History in him, but a mixture of such relations which though not true, might yet please and entertain his readers. Though others think they were not so inscribed by himself, but the names were given to them by the *Greeks* from the admiration his History had among them. However this were, this we are certain, that *Herodotus* was not the first suspected of falshood in these latter ages of the world, but even among the *Greeks* themselves there have been found some that would undertake to make good that charge against him. For so *Suidas* tells us of one *Harpocration* *Elins*, who writ
a book

a book on purpose to discover the falshood of *Herodotus* *ὅτι τὸ ἐκ τῆς ἱστορίας τῆς Ἡροδοτῆς ἰσχυρῶς*. *Plutarch* his books are well known of the *spight* or *malignity* of *Herodotus*; but the occasion of that is sufficiently known likewise, because *Herodotus* had given no very favourable character of *Plutarch's Country*. *Strabo* likewise seems to accuse *Herodotus* much of *nugacity* and *mixing prodigious fables* with his *History*; but I confess observing the grounds on which *Plutarch* insists against *Herodotus*, I am very prone to think that the ground of the great *pique* in some of the *Greek writers* against *Herodotus*, was, that he told too many tales out of *School*, and had discovered too much of the *Infancy* of *Greece*, and how much the *Grecians* borrowed of the *Egyptian Superstitions*: which *Plutarch* expressly speaks of, that *Herodotus* was too much led aside, *ἡ Ἀγνοία ἀναζήτησις καὶ μὴ δοκίμια τὰ συμβόματα καὶ ἀγνόματα τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς*.

Geogr. l. 17.

De Herod. l. 1.

Mal. p. 857.

C. Appian. l. 1.

Eaton. l. 1.

gog. l. 3.

Nol. ad

mum, Eu-

seb. 1572.

§. II.

Hist. l. 2. c. 4.

Although therefore *Herodotus* may not be much too blame in the things which the *Grecians* most charge him with, yet those who favour him most cannot excuse his palpable mistakes in some things, and ignorance in others. *Josephus* thinks he was deceived by the *Egyptian Priests* in things relating to the state of their affairs; of which *Joseph Scaliger* gives many accounts; either, saith he, the persons who gave him his intelligence were ignorant themselves; or else like true *Egyptians* they were cunning enough, but imposed upon *Herodotus* being a stranger and unacquainted with their artifices; or else he did not understand his Interpreter, or was deceived by him; or lastly, *Herodotus* might have so much of a *Grecian* in him, as to adulterate the true *History* with some fables of his own; wherefore he rather adheres to *Manetho* than *Herodotus* as to the *Egyptian History*: who yet elsewhere (I will not say with what constancy to himself) vouchsafes him this high elogium, that he is *Scrinium originum Græcarum & Barbararum, anthes à doctis nunquam ap-*

It cannot be denied but a great deal of very useful history may be fetched out of him; yet who can excuse his Ignorance, when he not only denies there is an Ocean compassing the Land, but condemns the *Geographers* for asserting

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ing it? Unless this might be any plea for his ignorance in Geography, that he had so many great names after him guilty of the same; Witness *Aristotles* suspicion that the *Indies* should be joyed to *Europe* about the *Straights*, where they fained *Hercules* his pillars to be. And the *Theraans* ignorance where any such place as *Libya* was, when the *Oracle* bid them plant a *Colony* there. Would it not have been worth ones while to have heard the great noise the *Sun* used to make every night when he doused his head in the *Ocean*, as none of the most ignorant *Greeks* imagined? And to have seen the *Sun* about *Hercules* his pillars to be a hundred times bigger then he appeared to them, as they commonly fancied. Was not *Alexander*, think we, well tutored in *Cosmography* by his Master *Aristotle*, when he writ word to his mother he had found out the head of *Nilus* in the *East Indies*? as *Arrian* relates the story. No wonder then his soldiers should mistake the *Mountain Paropamisus* in the *Indies*, for *Caucasus* near *Colchis*, when even their learned men thought *Colchis* the utmost boundary of the world on that side, as *Hercules* his pillars on this. What a lamentable account then were they able to give of the most antient times, who were so ignorant of the state of the world in their own time, when *Learning* was in its height in *Greece*, and frequent discoveries daily made of the world, by the wars which were made abroad! *Eratoſthenes* confesseth the *Gracians* were ignorant of a great part of *Asia* and the Northern parts of *Europe* before *Alexanders* expedition; and *Strabo* confesseth as much of the Western parts of *Europe* till the *Roman* expeditions thither. *Palus Meotis* and *Colchis*, *Geogr. l. 1.* saith he, were not fully known till the time of *Mithridates*, nor *Hyrkania*, *Bactriana*, and *Scythia*, till the *Parthian* wars. *Eratoſthenes* mentions some who thought the *Arabian Sea* to be only a *Lake*; and it further argues their ignorance in Geography, that the later *Geographers* alwayes correct the errors of the elder, as *Ptolomy* doth *Marinus*, *Eratoſthenes* those before him, *Hipparchus* *Eratoſthenes*, and *Strabo* not only both them, but *Endoxus*, *Ephorus*, *Dicaearchus*, *Polybius*, *Posidonius*, and almost all that had writ before him. I insist on these things, not that I would destroy the

the *credibility* of any *humane history*, where the Authors are guilty of any mistakes (for that were to take away the credit of all humane history) but to shew how *insufficient* those histories are to give us a certain account of the *original* of *Nations*, who were so unacquainted with the *state* of those *Nations* which they pretended to give an account of. For where there is wanting *divine revelation* (which was not pretended by any *Greek historians* ; and if it had, had been easily refused) there must be supposed a full and exact knowledge of all things pertaining to that which they pretend to give an account of ; and if they discover *apparent defect* and *insufficiency* (which hath been largely manifested as to them, in the precedent discourse) we have ground to deny the *credibility* of those *histories* upon the account of such defect and insufficiency. So much then will abundantly suffice for the making good the first argument against the *credibility* of *prophane histories*, as to the account which they give of ancient times, different from the *Word of God*.

CHAP. V.

The general uncertainty of Heathen Chronology.

The want of credibility in Heathen History further proved from the uncertainty and confusion in their accounts of ancient times; that discovered by the uncertain form of their years. An enquiry into the different forms of the Egyptian years, the first of thirty days, the second of four Months; of both instances given in the Egyptian history. Of the Chaldaea accounts, and the first Dynasties mentioned by Berosus, how they may be reduced to probability. Of the Egyptian Dynasties. Of Manetho. Reasons of accounting them fabulous, because not attested by any credible authority, and rejected by the best Historians. The opinion of Scaliger and Vossius, concerning their being cotemporary propounded and rejected with reasons against it. Of the ancient division of Egypt into Nomi or Provinces, and the number of them against Vossius and Kircher.

THe next thing to manifest how little there is of credibility in the account of *antient times*, reported by the histories of Heathen Nations, is, the *uncertainty, confusion and ambiguity* in the account which they give of those times. If we suppose them not at all defective as to their records, if yet we find the account given so perplexed, ambiguous, and confused, that we can find no certainty at all of the meaning of it, we have very little reason to entertain it with any certain assent unto it. Now this will be made evident by these things. 1. *The uncertainty of their Chronology, whereon their whole account depends.* 2. *The multitude of impostures taken for antient histories.* 3. *The uncertain meaning of those characters wherein their antient histories were preserved.* I begin with the great uncertainty of the Heathen Chronology, which will be manifested by two things, first, *the uncertain form of their years*: secondly, *the want or uncertainty of their $\alpha\mu\gamma\gamma\alpha\tau\epsilon$, or certain fixed Epochs from which to derive*

§. I.

I.

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their account of antient times. First, the uncertain form of their years; this of its self is sufficient to destroy the credibility of their accounts of antiquity, if it be manifested that they had different forms of years in use among them; and it be uncertain to which to referr their accounts they give; for if years be sometimes Lunar, sometimes Solar, and sometimes but of thirty dayes, sometimes of four Moneths, sometimes of three hundred and sixty dayes, sometimes three hundred sixty five, sometimes four times three hundred sixty five in their tetraeteris, sometimes eight times in their octaeteris, sometimes more, what certainty can we possibly have which of them to fix their accounts to? Especially when they only give them in general, and never tell us which of them they mean, which may make it shrewdly suspicious that their intent is only to impose on our understandings, and not to deal fairly and truly with us. We shall therefore so much explain the different form of their years, as thereby to shew what uncertainties we are left to by them: Where we meddle not with their Tropical and Astronomical years, but chiefly those which were in civil use among the several Nations we speak to. A year is nothing else but a System of dayes, and is therefore capable of as great variety, as dayes are in being joyned together; but usually there were some other lesser Systems of dayes then those which are called years, out of which the other doth result. Such is the

De Emen-
dit. Temp.
i. 1.

εβδομήκαισθερον, or the week which as Joseph Scaliger saith, was res omnibus Orientis populis ab ultima usque antiquitate usitata; a thing in continual use among the Eastern Nations, though it be but of late reception into the parts of Europe, and no elder then Christianity among them. Among the Romans was used an οκταμήκαισθερον which was for the sake of the Nundina returning every ninth day. The Mexicans as Scaliger tells us, reckon all by a τρεκαδουκάκισθερον, a System of thirteen dayes. Next to these were the Moneths which were either Lunar or Solar. The Lunar were either from the Moons return to the same point of the Zodiack again, called πεπλοσθ οὐρανίου, which was less then twenty eight dayes; but this was of no use in civil computations; or else from one conjunction of the Moon with the Sun to another, which

was called *κοῖτος* & *σάληνς*; or else from the first *phasis* of the Moon, the second day after its *epitus*, called *φανς* and *ἀμην-αρεσις σάληνς*; some as the *Græcians* reckoned their *Lunar months* from the *κοῖτος*, as *Scaliger* proves out of *Vitruius*: others from the *phasis*, as some *Eastern Nations* did; as the *Jews* began their observation of the *New Moons* from the first *phasis* or appearance of her after the *κοῖτος*. The *Solar months* were either *natural*, such as were defined by the Sun's passage from one sign of the *Zodiack* to another; or *civil*, whereby the *months* were equally divided into *thirty dayes* apiece, as in the *Græcian* and *Egyptian year*.

Having thus far seen of what the year consists, we now proceed to shew that the ancient Nations did not observe one constant certain form of year among them, but had several in use, to which their accounts may be referred. And because the *Egyptians* are supposed to have been best skilled as to the form of the year, according to that of *Macrobius*, *Anni cerius modus apud solos semper Egyptios fuit*. We shall particularly demonstrate the variety of years in use among them; By which we shall see what great uncertainty there is in their accounts of their *Dynasties*. For first it is evident that the time of 30. dayes was among the ancient *Egyptians* accounted a year, for which we have the testimony of *Plutarch* in *Numa*. *Ἀποκατὰ τὴν ἑβδωδαίαν, εἰς τὰ περὶ αὐτῶν*; The *Egyptians* at first had a year consisting of one month, and after of four; And this, if we believe *Alexander ab Alexandro*, was the year most *Gen. Diis* frequently in use among them. So *Varro* in *Lactantius* gives *l. 2. c. 13.* an account of the great age of some men in ancient times, who are supposed to have lived 1000 years; *Ait enim apud Egyptios pro annis menses haberi; ut non Solis per 12 signa circuitus faciat annum, sed Luna que orbem illum signiferum 30 dierum spatio illustrat.* It is then evident that this year of thirty dayes was in use among the *Egyptians*: the only scruple is, whether it was used in their sacred accounts or no: and that it was, we have a pregnant testimony in *Plutarch*, in the fore-cited place; speaking of the *Egyptians* great pretence to antiquity, he gives this account of it;

παλαιοι ἀμείναντες ἐπὶ τῶν χρόνων ἐκταφύσαντες, ἀπὸ τοῦ μηνὸς εἰς τὸν ἀριθμὸν πλέσαντες. They reckon an infinite number of years in their accounts, because they reckon their months instead of years.

According to this computation, it will be no difficult matter to reduce the vast accounts of the Egyptian antiquity to some proportion, and to reconcile their exorbitant Dynasties with sobriety and truth, especially as to the account given of them by *Diodorus Siculus*; for so *Diodorus* gives in their accounts, that the Gods and Heroes reigned in Egypt for the space of near 18000 years, and the last of them was *Orus* the Son of *Isis*: From the reign of men in Egypt he reckons about 9500 years to the time (if we admit of *Jacob. Capellus*, his correction of *πεντακσίαιον* for *πεντακσχιόν* in *Diodorus*) with his entrance into Egypt, which was in the 180 Olympiad. Now as the fore said learned Author observes, *Diodorus* came into Egypt A. M. 3940. V. C. 694. the mortal men then had reigned in Egypt 9500 years, which taking it for these Lunar years of 30 days, makes of Julian years 780. the Heroes and Gods 18000 months, that is of Julian years 1478; from these two sums together are gathered 2258 years, which being deducted from the year of the world 3940 falls in the year of the world 1682. about which time *Misraim*, who was the great historical *Osiris* of Egypt (so called by a light variation of his former name) might be well supposed to be born; for that was in the year of Noah 630. and so *Orus* might be born, who was the Son of *Osiris*, about the year of the world 1778. Between whose time and *Alexander* the great his Conquest of Egypt, the Egyptians, as the same *Diodorus* tells us, reckon little less than 23000 years: Now according to this computation of 30 days for a year, we may reconcile this to truth too; for from 1778 to 3667 of the world, which falls upon the 417 year of Nabonassar, there is an interval of 1889 years, which makes of these Lunar years of 30 days, saith *Capellus*, 22996. and 15 days, which comes very near, if not altogether, up to the Egyptian Computation: So when the Egyptians according to *Diodorus*, make no less than 10000 years distance

Biblioth.
l. 1.

H. P. fac.
et Exot. A.
M. 1681.

stance between their *Hercules* and *Hercules Bæotius*, the Son of *Alcmena*, it must be understood of these *Lunar years*; for granting what the *Egyptians* say, that *Hercules Bæotius* lived but one generation before the *Trojan war*, and so his time to fall out about 2783. reckoning now backward from thence, and deducting from that year of the world 10000 *moneths* of 30 *days*, or *Julian years* 831. and 130 *days*, and the time of the *Egyptian Hercules* will fall about the first year of the world, 1962. about which time we may well suppose him to live or d.e. And according to this computation we are to understand what the *Egyptians* told *Herodotus*, that from their first *King* or *Priest of Vulcan*, till the time of *Sethos* (in whose time *Sennacherib* attempted the Conquest of *Egypt*) that there had been passed 341 *Generations*, and as many *Kings* and *High-Priests*, and 11340 *years*, reckoning three *Generations* to make up a *Century*. But now, if we understand this prodigious computation according to this form of years, we may suspect the *Egyptians* of an intention to deceive *Herodotus* and the credulous *Greeks*, but yet not impeach them of direct falsehood; it being thus reconcilable to truth. For according to this account 100 years makes 3000 *dayes*, and a *Generation* 1000 so many *dayes* the *Kings* or *Priests of Vulcan* may be allowed to reign; so 340 *Generations* of 8000 *dayes* apiece, make up 340000 *dayes*, to which, if we add the 200-*days* which *Sethos* had now reigned upon *Sennacherib's* invasion, we have 340200 *dayes*, which makes up of these years of 30 *dayes* apiece 11340, which is the number assigned by *Herodotus*: *Jacobus Capellus* thinks the *Epocha* from whence these years are to be reckoned, is from *A. M.* 2350. when *Mephres* began to reign in *Egypt*, from whence, if we number these 340200 *dayes*, or 11340 *monethly years*, which makes up of *Julian years* 931. and 152 *days*, the number falls *A. M.* 3282. about which time in probability *Sennacherib* invaded *Egypt*. Thus we see by making use of those *Lunar years*, that it is possible to reconcile some of the *Egyptian* extravagant accounts to some probability and consistency with truth; but however we owe very little thanks

*Hist. sacr. et
Exotic.
p. 198.*

to the *Egyptians* for it, who deliver these things in gross, without telling us which years they mean, and thereby evidence their intent to deceive all who have so little wit as to be deceived by them.

§. 3. The next kind and form of the *Egyptian year*, was that which consisted of four equal moneths, amounting to 120 dayes; the use of this kind of year among them is attested by *Plutarch* in the fore cited place, and by *Diodorus*, who gives an account of this kind of year among the

L. 1.

Polyhist.

c. 3.

De Civit.

Dei l. 12.

c. 10.

Egyptians. *Solinus* seems to mention this as the only year in request among the *Egyptians*: and so *S. Austin*, *Perhibentur Egyptii quondam tam breves annos habuisse ut quaternis mensibus finirentur*. This renders then the *Egyptians* account yet more uncertain, and only leaves us to guess with the greatest probability of reason what form of year was meant by them in their *Computations*. So when *Diadorus* speaks so much in favour of the old *Egyptian Kings* and *Laws*, and produceth this from the *Egyptian Priests*, as the best evidence of the excellent temper of their Government, that they had *Kings* of their own Nation for the space of 47000 years, till the time of *Cambyfes* his inroad into *Egypt*, which was in the third year of the 63 *Olympiad*. Now besides the apparent contradiction of these accounts to the other already explained, if we take them in gross, as the *Egyptians* give them, it is evident this can be no otherwise true, then by taking these accounts in that form of years now mentioned by us. For these 4700 years, taking them for 120 dayes apiece, make up of *Julian years* 1544 which being deducted from the year of the world 3475 which was the time when *Cambyfes* invaded *Egypt*, the remainder is *A. M.* 1931 about which time we may fix the death of *Orus*, from whom their proper

De Idolat.

l. 1. c. 28.

are to understand what they report of the long lives of their ancient *Kings*, when they attribute to each of them the space of 300 years, as when they attribute a 1000 and more to their eldest *Kings*, we are to understand them of simple *Lunar years* of 30 days, by which these *Gigantick* measures of the term of their lives, may without the help of

of *Procrustes* be but short according to the proportion of mens ordinary age in those eldest times. So when *Diodorus* reckons from the death of *Protemus* to his own time *A. M.* 3940. 3400 years, it must be understood of these years of four equal months; for so those 340 years make up of *Julian years* 1117. which being deduced from 3940. the remainder is 2823 about which year of the world *Protemus* may be supposed to live, which was about the time of the *Judges* in *Israel*.

Neither was this only the *Egyptians* way, but in probability the ancient *Chaldeans* observed the same, which may be a ground likewise of those unmeasurable accounts among them in their first *Dynasties*, as is evident in the fragments of *Abydenus* and *Apollodorus* out of *Berosus*, where the times of their first *Kings* are reckoned not by years but *Σάτα*, *Νήτα*, and *Σώτα*; now according to them every *Σάτ* contained 3600 years, *Νήτ* 600, *Σώτ* 60. Now who can imagine that *Alorus* and the ten *Kings* from him to *Xisuthrus* should reign 120 *Sars* as their computation is, which reckoning for every *Saros* 3600 years makes up 432000 years? A very fair sum for the *Chaldean Dynasties* before the time of *Xisuthrus* by whom in probability *Noah* was by them understood. There have been only two ways thought on of dealing with these computations; either rejecting them as wholly *fabulous*, and founded on no evidence or records of history, as we have seen already; only they might retain (being so near the place of the settlement of *Noah* and his posterity after the flood) the memory not only of the flood (of which it is evident they had several remainders preserved in their traditions) but likewise of the ages of men preceding the flood, wherein they were right, reckoning from *Alorus* the first to *Xisuthrus*, i. e. from *Adam* to *Noah* ten *Generations*; but as to the names of those ten persons and the times they lived in, being wholly ignorant through the unfaithfulness of tradition, they took their liberty not only of coining names, but of setting what age to them they pleased themselves. And to this purpose *Not. in Gr. Scaliger* observes that some of their first *Kings* are reckoned *Euseb.* p. before the flood, which faith he. is denied by *Georgius Syn.* 406.

cellus without any shew of reason. Thus far then we may admit of the *Chaldeans Dynasties* as to some part of the tradition, but rejecting their names and computations as fabulous. The other way of explaining these *Dynasties*, is by the several wayes of computation among them; For the learned *Monks*, *Panodorus*, and *Anianus*, understand those vast sums, not of *years*, but *dayes*, and so make a *Saros* to contain 120 moneths of 30 dayes a piece; which saith *Scaliger*, make ten *Chaldee years*, and a *Nirus* 20 equal moneths, and a *Sesos* two: according to which computation, the 100 *Sari* make but 1200 *years*. But this computation of theirs is rejected by *Georgius Syncellus*, because he supposeth *Eusebius* so well veried in these things, that he would never have set them down for *years*, if the *Chaldeans* had not understood them so, and therefore he would not trouble himself in reducing *Fables* to true *Histry*, as he expresseth it, whose words are at large produced by *Scaliger* in the fore-cited place; and it will appear more necessary to reject those *Chaldee computations*, if we take the *sums* of their *years* in the sense which *Salmasius* gives of them in the preface to his book *De annis Climactericis* (from whom *Pyrerius* the Author of the *Praadamites*) hath borrowed most of his arguments as to these things.) According to him then, every *Sar* contained no less then 6000 *years*, as the *Toman* among the *Persians* contained 10000 but because that learned man hath only given us his *reperi Scriptum*, without any certain foundation for so large an account of those *sums*, we shall take them in as favourable a sense as we can. In order to which a very learned man of our own hath found a third interpretation of the *Sar* in the *Chaldee accounts*, from a correction of *Suidas* by the *M. S.* in the *Vatican Library*, according to which he thus reads the words. *Of* $\rho\alpha\ \mu\epsilon\gamma\alpha\ \mu\epsilon\sigma\sigma\epsilon\ \epsilon\pi\alpha\upsilon\tau\epsilon\varsigma\ \beta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\epsilon\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\epsilon\ \chi\alpha\lambda\delta\alpha\iota\omega\upsilon\ \psi\eta\phi\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\ \epsilon\iota\pi\epsilon\iota\ \tau\omicron\ \sigma\alpha\gamma\epsilon\ \mu\epsilon\sigma\sigma\epsilon\ \Sigma\alpha\upsilon\mu\alpha\kappa\omega\varsigma\ \sigma\alpha\varsigma\ \epsilon\iota\sigma\ \gamma\iota\upsilon\sigma\tau\omicron\iota$ in *επαυται μωρες εε*. and so the sense, saith he, is clear *Sar* according to the *Chaldee account* comprehends 222 months, which come to eighteen years and six months; therefore 120 *Sar* make 2220 *years*; and therefore, (he adds) for $\beta\epsilon\ \alpha\epsilon\ \beta'$. I read, leaving out the last $\beta\epsilon\ \beta\alpha\alpha'$. Now according to this sense,

D. Pearson
on the
Creed.
p. 115
1. edit.

sense of 120. *Sari* to comprehend the *sum* of 2220. years, it will be no difficult matter to reduce the *fragment* of *Berosus* concerning the ten *Kings* before the flood reigning 120. *Sari*, to some degree of probability. As to which I shall only suppose these two things. First, that the ancient *Chaldeans* had preserved among them some tradition of the number of the chief persons before the flood; for we find them exactly agreeing with the *Scriptures* as to the number, though differing as to the names of them, which may be seen in the fragments of *Africanus* preserved in *Eusebius* his *Greek Chronica*. Secondly, that *Berosus* from whom *Apollodorus* and *Alexander Polyhistor* deliver these computations, might as to the account of the times of those persons follow the translation of the *Septuagint*. For I have already made it evident that *Berosus* did not publish his *History* till after the *Septuagint* was abroad; now according to the computation of the *Septuagint* of the ages before the flood, these 120. *Sari* of the ten *Kings* will not much disagree from it. For these make 2220. years of these ten persons, and the *Septuagint* in all make 2242. so that if in stead of *βωβ* in *Snidas*, we only read it *βρωβ* we have the exact computation of the *Septuagint* in these 120. *Sari*; but of this let the learned judge.

We now come to the *Egyptian Dynasties* of *Manetho*, as to which I doubt we must be fain to take the same course that *Eusebius* did with the *Chaldean*, *ὡς οὐκ ἐστὶν ἄξιον τὸ ἰδίῳ τῷ ἀνδρὶ*, not to trouble our selves overmuch in seeking to reconcile *Fables* to truth. Great pains is taken by some very learned men to reduce the disorderly *Dynasties* of *Manetho* to some probable account; but I must confess upon an impartial examination of them, that I think they have striven if not to make an *Ethiopian* wise, yet an *Egyptian* to speak truth concerning his own Country, which are almost of an equal impossibility. *Joseph Scaliger* who first in this latter age of the world produced them into the light out of *Georgius Syncellus*, hath a more favourable opinion of them, then of the *Egyptian History*, of *Herodotus*, *Diodorus* and others, but upon what account I cannot imagine. Is it because four *Dynasties* according to his own computation exceed the

creation of the world according to the true account? for which he is said to make use of his *Tempus prolepsicum* and *Julian period*, which reacheth 764 years beyond the age of the world, and was invented by him from the multiplication of the great *Cycle* into the *indiction*, i. e. of 532. into 15. Or is it because forsooth *Manetho* hath digested all into better order and reckoned up the several *Dynasties* which lay confused in other authors? but this only shews him a more cunning impostor who saw the former accounts given by others would not serve the turn, and therefore pretends to more exactness and diligence, that he might more easily deceive his readers. But setting aside those things which have been said already concerning *Manetho*, I have these things which make me reject his *Dynasties* as *fabulous*: first, the vast difference between *Manetho* his accounts and all others who have written the *Egyptian History* in the order and names of his *Dynasties*. Where do we ever read of the several *Dynasties* of the *Thinites*, *Memphites*, *Saites*, *Diospolitans* and many others but in himself? It is very strange that neither *Herodotus*, nor *Eratosthenes*, nor *Diodorus*, who have all written a succession of the *Egyptian Kings*, should neither by their own industry, nor by all the interest they had in *Egypt*, get any knowledge of these methodically digested *Dynasties*. Besides, had there been any historical certainty in these *Dynasties* of *Manetho*, whence comes it to pass that they should be so silently passed over by those who were *Egyptian Priests* themselves and undertook to write the History of *Egypt*? Such were *Charemon* who was an *isopsephus* a sacred scribe, and *Ptolomaeus Mendesium* who was an *Egyptian Priest*, as *Eusebius* tells us, and comprehended the history of *Egypt* in three books. Now had this History been so antientical as is pretended, whence come so many and great contradictions between them, in so much that *Josephus* saith, *If that which they report were true, it were impossible they should so much differ; but they labour in the invention of lies, and write neither agreeably to the truth nor to one another?* So that it is next to a miracle almost to see how prodigiously fond of these *Dynasties* *Kircher* is, and what pains he hath taken to no purpose about

Q. App. l. 1.

about them; scio multos esse, saith he, *qui hujusmodi Dynastias meras nugas & commenta putant*; very true; but why is not he of the same mind too? he confesseth himself to have been so once; but since he had conversed more with the Oriental traditions, he hath found them not to be so fabulous as many make them. It seems then the *Basis* of the Egyptian Dynasties as well before the flood as after, must lye in this Oriental tradition; a thing, which some, to shew their great skill in those Eastern languages, are grown very fond of. But as far as I can yet see, they sail to Ophir not for gold but Peacocks; and the next Legend the world hath should be called *Legenda Orientalis*. For can anything be more irrational, absurd and fabulous, then those Arabick traditions which that author scrapes as much for, as *AEsop* Cock did on the Dung hill? but there is no jewel to be found among them: Unless we should take those 15. hard names of men for such which by the Arabick Writers are said to have succeeded each other in Egypt before the flood, viz. *Natraus, Nathras, Mesram, Henoah, Arjak, Hasilim, Husal, Tatrafan, Sarkak, Schaluk, Surish*, (who they say built the Pyramids) *Hugish, Manans, Aphrus, Malinnus, Abn Ama Pharaun*, in whose time they say the flood came. But should we be so little befriended by reason as to grant all this, what advantage will this be to *Manetho* who speaks not of Kings, but whole Dynasties? so that it still appears these Dynasties are fabulous not being attested by any credible witnesses. Secondly, All those who profess to follow *Manetho*, differ strangely from one another, as *Iosephus, Africanus, Eusebius, George the Syncellus* of the patriarchs of *Tarasius*; and *Scaliger* who hath taken so much pains in digesting of them, yet he is condemned by others since; and *Isaac Vossius* gives a particular caution to his reader, *In his Dynastiis compingendis nequaquam esse sequendum ordinem & calculum Scaligeri*. What should be the reason of this diversity, but that they thought them not so authentick, but they might cut off, alter and transpose as they saw occasion? which is most plain and evident in *Eusebius*, who makes no difficulty of cutting off one whole Dynasty, and dividing another into two, only to reconcile the distance between

*Ordip Egy.
To. 1. Syn.
1. c. 9.*

*De aet.
Mundi.
cap. 10.*

Thorus the Egyptian King, and *Tentamus* the Assyrian Emperour, and the destruction of *Troy*, and therefore leaves out 4. Assyrian Kings and a whole Dynasty of the Egyptians to make a *Synchronisme* between those three.

§. 6.

But yet there hath been something very fairly offered to the world to clear the truth, if not *Manetho*, in order to his Dynasties, viz. that the subtle Egyptian to inbase the antiquity of his own Country, did take *implicite* years for solid, and place those in a succession which were *cotemporary* one with another; This indeed is a very compendious way to advance a great sum of years with a very little charge:

Hist. Sacr.
et exot. A.
M. 3308.

Wherein he hath done saith *Capellus*, as if a Spaniard in the Indies should glory of the antiquity of the Dynasties of Spain, and should attribute to the Earles of *Barcinona* 337. years, to the King of *Arragon* 498. to the King of *Portugal* 418. to the King of *Lio* 545. of *Castile* 800. years, and yet all these Dynasties rise from the years of our Lord 717. when the *Saracens* first entred Spain. There are very few Nations, but will go near to vie antiquity with the Egyptians, if they may thus be allowed to reckon successively all those petty royalities which antiently were in most Nations; as might be particularly instanced in most great Empires, that they gradually rise from the subduing and incorporating of those petty royalities into which the several Nations were cantonized before. And there seems to be very strong ground of suspicion that some such thing was designed by *Manetho* from the 32. Dynasty which is of the *Diospolitan Thebans*; for this Dynasty is said to begin from the tenth year of the 15. Dynasty of the *Phanician Pastours* in the time of *Saites*; now which is most observable, he that begins this Dynasty, is of the very same name with him who begins the very first Dynasty of *Manetho*, who is *Menes*, and so likewise his son *Archorhis* is the same in both: Which hath made many think because *Menes* is reckoned first, not only in both these, but in *Diodorus*, *Eratosthenes* and others, that this *Menes* was he who first began the Kingdom of Egypt, after whose time it was divided into several Dynasties.

Canon:

Isag. l. 3.

Which makes *Scaliger* say, *illa vitiosissima regna fuerunt instar latrociniorum, ubi vis non lex, aut successio aut suffragia populi*

populi reges in folio regni collocabant. This opinion of the ^{Gerard. in} existence of these *Dynasties* is much embraced by ^{Vossius. 1. c. 28.} *Vossius*, both *Father* and *Son*, and by the *Father* made use of to ^{1st. Voss.} *Scaliger* from *calumniators*, who made as though ^{et. Mur.} *Scaliger* did in effect overthrow the authority of the *Scriptures* by mentioning with some applause the *Dynasties* of *Manetho*.

But to this opinion how plausible soever it seems, I offer ^{S. 7.} these exceptions. First, As to that *Menes* who is supposed to be the first founder of the *Egyptian Kingdom*, after whose death it is supposed that *Egypt* was divided into all these *Dynasties*, I demand therefore who this *Menes* was; was he the same with him whom the *Scripture* calls *Misraim* who was the first Planter of *Egypt*? this is not probable, for in all probability his name must be sought among the *Gods* and not the *mortals* that reigned. If we suppose him to be any other after him, it will be hard giving an account how he came to have the whole power of *Egypt* in his hands, and so soon after him it should be divided. For *Kingdoms* are oftentimes made up of those *petty royalties* before; but it will be very hard finding instances of one persons enjoying the whole power, and so many *Dynasties* to arise after his decease, and to continue *coexistent* in peace and full power so long as these several *Dynasties* are supposed to do. Besides, is it not very strange that no *Historian* should mention such a former distribution of several principalities so antiently in *Egypt*? But that which to me utterly overthrows the *coexistence* of these *Dynasties* in *Egypt*, is, by comparing with them what we finde in *Scripture* of greatest antiquity concerning the *Kingdom* of *Egypt*; which I cannot but wonder that none of these learned men should take notice of. When the *Egyptian Kingdom* was first founded, is not here a place to enquire; but it is evident that in *Abrahams* time, there was a *Pharaoh King* of *Egypt* (whom ^{Gen. 12.} *Archbishop Usher* thinks to have been *Apophis*) not *Abimelech* the first *King* of *Egypt*, as *Constantinus Manasses* reports in his *Annals* (by a ridiculous mistake of the *King* of *Gerar* for the *King* of *Egypt*.) This *Pharaoh* was then certainly *King* of all the *Land* of *Egypt*, which still in *Scripture*

pture is called the *Land of Misraim* from the first planter of it; and this was of very great antiquity; and therefore *Fanccius* (though improbably) thinks this *Pharaoh* to have been *Ofris*, and *Rivet* thinks *Misraim* might have been alive till that time; here then we find no *Dynasties* coexisting, but one *Kingdom* under one *King*. If we descend somewhat lower, to the times of *Jacob* and *Joseph*, the evidence is so undoubted of *Egypt* being an entire *Kingdom* under one *King*, that he may have just cause to suspect the eyes either of his body or his mind that distrusts it. For what more evident then that *Pharaoh* who preferred *Joseph*, was *King of all the Land of Egypt*? Were not the *seven years of famine* over all the *Land of Egypt*? *Gen. 41. 45.* Was not *Joseph* set by *Pharaoh* over all the *Land of Egypt*? *Gen. 41. 41, 43, 45.* And did not *Joseph* go over all the *Land of Egypt* to gather corn? *Gen. 41. 46.* Nay did not he buy all the *Land of Egypt* for *Pharaoh*? *Gen. 47. 20.* Can there possibly be given any fuller evidence of an entire *Kingdom*; then these are that *Egypt* was such then? Afterwards we read of one *King* after another in *Egypt* for the space of nigh two hundred years, during the children of *Israel* slavery in *Egypt*; and was not he think we, *King* over all *Egypt*, in whose time the children of *Israel* went out thence? And in all the following history of Scripture, is there not mention made of *Egypt* still as an entire *Kingdom*, and of one *King* over it? Where then is there any place for these contemporary *Dynasties* in *Egypt*? Nowhere that I know of, but in the fancies of some learned men.

§. 8.

Indeed there is one place that seems to give some countenance to this opinion; but it is in far later times then the first *Dynasties* of *Manetho* are supposed to be in, which is in *Isai. 19. 2.* Where God, saith he, would set the *Egyptians* against the *Egyptians*, and they shall fight every one against his brother, *City* against *City*, and *Kingdom* against *Kingdom*. Where it seems that there were several *Kingdoms* then existent among the *Egyptians*; but the *Septuagint* very well renders it *ἑαυτοῖς ἐν ἑαυτοῖς* now *ἑαυτοῖς* among the *Egyptians*, as *Epiphanius* and others tell us, notes *ἑαυτοῖς ἐν ἑαυτοῖς* the precincts of every great *City* such as

our Counties are, and therefore Pliny renders *topoi* by *prose-
tura*; these were the several Provinces of Egypt, of
which there were thirty six in Egypt, ten in Thebais, ten
in Delta, the other sixteen in the midland parts; so that by
Kingdom against Kingdom, no more is meant then one
Province being set against another. Isaac Vossius thinks the
number of the antient Nomi was twelve, and that over
every one of these was a peculiar King; and that this num-
ber may be gathered from the Dynasties of Manetho, setting
aside the Dynasties of the Persians, Ethiopians, and Pha-
nicians: viz. the Thebites, Memphites, Elephantines, He-
racleopolitans, Diospolitan Thebans, the lesser Diospolitans,
Xoites, Tanites, Bubastites, Saïtes, Mendesiens and Sebenny-
tes: and to that Egypt was antiently a Dodecarchy, as
England in the Saxons times was a Heptarchy. But as it al-
ready appears, there could be antiently no such Dodecarchy
in Egypt; so it is likewise evident that this distribution of
Egypt into Nomi is a later thing, and by most writers is
attributed to Sesosis or Sesostris, whom Josephus supposeth
to be Sesac King of Egypt, cotemporary with Rehoboam.
Indeed if we believe Geraldinus the Arabick Historian cited
by Kircher, the most antient distribution of Egypt was
into four parts. Misraim held one part to himself, and gave
his son Copt another, Esmun a third, and Atrib a fourth
part; which division the same Author affirms to have con-
tinued till the time of Joseph, who made a new distribution
of the whole Land: After him Sesostris divided the whole
into thirty several Nomi; so Kircher will needs have it,
that of the three several parts of Egypt, each might have
for some mystical signification its ten Nomi, of which every
one had its distinct and peculiar God it worshipped, and a
particular Palace in the Labyrinth, and a peculiar Sanhedrim
or Court of Justice belonging to it. But it evidently appears
by that vain-glorious Oedipus, that it is a far easier matter to
make new mysteries, then to interpret old ones, which as it
might be easily discovered in the main foundations whereon
that structure stands; so we have some evidence of it in our
first entrance into it, in this part of Chorography of Egypt.
For from whence had he this exact division of Egypt into
thirty

thirty Nomi, ten of which belonged to the upper *Egypt* or *Thebaïs*, ten to *Delta* or the lower *Egypt*, and the ten remaining to the midland *Countray*? Hath he this from *Ptolomy*, whose *Scheme* of the several *Nomi* he publisheth? *Syntag. 1. c. 2. p. 7.* No. *Ptolomy* and *Pliny* by his own confession afterwards add many other to these, as *Omphile*, *Phanturites*, *Tinistes*, *Phatnites*, *Nemt*, *Heptanomos*, &c. Hath he it from *Strabo* whose authority he cites for it? No such matter. For *Strabo* saith expressly that *Thebaïs* had ten *Nomi*, *Delta* ten, and the midland sixteen; only some are of opinion, saith he, that there were as many *Nomi* as *Palaces* in the *Labyrinth*, which were toward thirty; but yet the number is uncertain still. We see by this how ominous it is for an *Oedipus* to stumble at the threshold, and how easie a matter it is to interpret mysteries, if we may have the making of them. We see then no evidence at all for these cotemporary *Dynasties* of *Manetho*; which yet if we should grant, would be a further argument of the uncertainty of *Heathen Chronology*, when among them *implicite* years are given out to the world for *solid*; so that which way soever *Manetho* his *Dynasties* be taken, they will prove the thing in hand, whether we suppose them at least most part fabulous, or should grant he had taken those in succession to each other, which were co-existent with one another.

CHAP. VI.

The uncertain Epochs of Heathen Chronology.

An account given of the defect of Chronology in the eldest times. Of the Solar year among the Egyptians, the original of the Epochs, the antiquity of Intercalation among them. Of the several Canicular years; the difference between Scaliger and Petavius considered. The certain Epochs of the Egyptian history no elder than Nabonasser. Of the Græcian accounts. The fabulousness of the Heroical age of Greece. Of the ancient Græcian Kingdoms. The beginning of the Olympiads. The uncertain Origines of the Western Nations. Of the Latine Dynasties. The different Palilia of Rome. The uncertain reckoning Ab V. C. Of impostures as to ancient histories. Of Annius, Inghiramius, and others. Of the characters used by Heathen Priests. No sacred characters among the Jews. The partiality and inconsistency of Heathen histories with each other. From all which the want of credibility in them as to an account of ancient times is clearly demonstrated.

THE next thing to evidence the uncertainty of the Heathen Chronology, is, the want of certain *parapegmata*, or some fixed periods of time, according to which the accounts of times must be made. For if there be no certain Epochs by which to reckon the succession of ages, the distance of intervals, and all intervening accidents, we must of necessity fluctuate in continual uncertainties, and have no sure foundation to bottom any account of antient times upon. The great reason of this defect, is the little care which those who lived in the eldest times had to preserve the memory of any antient tradition among themselves, or to convey it to posterity in such a way as might be least lyable to imposture. Of all kinds of Learning, Chronology was the most rude in eldest times: and yet that is well called by Scaliger, *the life and soul of History*, without which, History is but a confused

§. I.

fused lump, a meer *Mola*, an indigested piece of flesh, without life or form. The antient accounts of the world were merely from year to year, and that with abundance of obscurity, uncertainty and variety; sometimes going by the course of the *Moon*, and therein they were as mutable as the *Moon* herself, how to conform the year regularly to her motion; and it was yet greater difficulty to regulate it by the course of the *Sun*, and to make the accounts of the *Sun* and *Moon* meet. There was so much perplexity and confusion about the ordering of a single year, and so long in most Nations before they could bring it into any order, that we are not to expect any fixed periods by which to find out the succession of ages among them. Among the *Egyptians* who are supposed most skilful in the account of the year, it was a long time before they found out any certain course of it. It is agreed by most, that when the *Egyptian Priests* had found out the form of the year by the course of the *Sun*, (which is attributed by *Diodorus* to the *Heliopolitan Priests*) yet the year in common use was only of 360. dayes, which in any great period of years must needs cause a monstrous confusion by reason that their *Moneths* must of necessity by degrees change their place, so that in the great *Canicular year* of 730 *Thoyth* which was the beginning of the *Summer Solstice* in the entrance into that period, would be removed into the midst of *Winter*, from whence arose that *Egyptian Fable* in *Herodotus*, that in the time of their eldest *Kings*, the *Sun* had twice changed his rising and setting; which was only caused by the variation of their *Moneths*, and not by any alteration in the course of the *Sun*. Which defect the *Egyptian Priests* at last observing, saw a necessity of adding five dayes to the end of the year, which thence were called *ἐπαιγεμας*, which implies they were not anciently in use among them, being afterwards added to make up the course of the year. Which the *Egyptians* give an account of, as *Plutarch* tells us under this Fable: *Mercury* being once at *Dice* with the *Moon*, he got from her the 72. part of the year, which he after added to the 360 dayes which were anciently the dayes of the year, which they called *ἐπαιγεμας*, and therein celebrated the *Festivals* of their gods, thence the names

L. i. c. 50.

Entrep.
Vide Scaliger. de
Emend.
Temp. l. 3.
p. 195.

De Iside
& Osiri.

names of the several *Ægyptians* were taken from the Gods; the first was called *Osiris*, it being celebrated in honour of him; the second *Achthis*, by which *Scaliger* understands *Anubis*, but *Vossius* more probably the *Senior Orus*; the third to *Typho*, the fourth to *Isis*, the fifth to *Nephthys* the wife of *Typho* and sister to *Isis*. This course of the year *Scaliger* thinks that the *Ægyptians* represented by the Serpent called *Nehus* being described in a round circle biting some part of his tail in his mouth, whereby, saith he, they would have it understood, that the form of the year was not perfect without that adjection of five dayes to the end of the year: For to this day, saith he, the *Coptites* and ancient *Ægyptians* call the end of the year *νῆϋς*. It seems that at erwards they understood likewise the necessity of intercalation of a day every fourth year for the sake of the redundant *quadrant* each year above 365 dayes; which course of four years they called their *Canicular year*, because they observed its defect in that time one whole day from the rising of the *Dog-star*; and besides, that they called it *ἡμέρα ἑρῆ* and *ἑρῆ θῆς*, & *Instrum Sothiacum* from *Σοθῆς* the *Dog-star*; but *Censorinus* denies any use of intercalation among the *Ægyptians* in their civil year, although their *Sacred* and *Hieroglyphical* years might admit of it. And upon this ground, I suppose the controversie between those two learned persons *Scaliger* and *Petavius* concerning the antiquity of *Intercalation* among the *Ægyptians* may be reconciled. For on the one side it is apparent, that the ordinary or civil year did want intercalation, by this testimony of *Censorinus*; *Eorum annus civilis solos habet dies 365. sine ulla intercalari; itaque quadriennium apud eos uno circiter die minus est quam naturale quadriennium*; and thence saith he, it comes to pass, that in 1461. years which was the great *Heliacal year*, it returns to the same beginning; for then the *Dog-star* ariseth again upon the first day of the month *Thoyth*, as it did at the beginning of this great *Canicular year*; and that this kind of civil year did continue among them in the time of *Censorinus* (which was of the *Dionysian* account 238.) appears by this, that he saith in the year wherein he wrote his book, the *New-moon* of *Thoyth* was

De Idol. l. 1. c. 18.

De die Natali c. 18.

Pet. av. de doct. temp. l. 3. c. 2.

before the seventh day of the *Calends* of *July*, whereas 100 years before, it was before the 12 of the *Calends* of *August*: whence it is evident, that the *Julian year* whatever some learned men pretend to the contrary, was not in ordinary use among the *Egyptians* in that time: and that *Sosigenes* when he corrected the *Roman account*, and brought in the form of the *Julian year*, did not take his pattern from the *Egyptian year*, but from the *Gracians* of *Alexandria*, who did make use of the *quadrant* added to the 365. years, which the *Egyptians* did not, as appears further by the golden circle in the monument of *Osymandnas* (which *Diodorus* speaks of of *Hecataeus Mithicus*) which was of 365 cubits compass, and divided into so many segments for every day with the observations of the rising and setting of the several stars, and the effects portended by them. And the reason why this year continued in civil use among the *Egyptians*, is well assigned by *Geminus*, that the *Egyptians* according to a superstitious observation they had, would needs have their *Festivals* run through every day in the year. But now on the other side, it is as evident that by continual observation the wisest of the *Egyptian Priests* did discern the necessity of *intercalation*, and that there wanted six hours in every year to make it complete, which every four years would make the *intercalation* of a day necessary: so much by *Diodorus* is affirmed of the *Theban Priests* who were the best *Astronomers*, and by *Strabo* both of the *Theban* and *Heliopolitan*: and so likewise *Horapollon*, whose work was to interpret the more abstruse Learning of the *Egyptian Priests*; when (saith he) the *Egyptians* would express a year, they name a *quadrant*, because from one rising of the star *Sothis* to another, the fourth part of a day is added, so that the year consists of 365. days (and a quadrant must be added, because of the antecedents and consequents) therefore every fourth year they reckon a *supernumerary* day. How unjustly *Petavius* hath charged *Scaliger* with falsehood in reference to this testimony of *Horapollon*, merely because the citation did not appear in that chapter mentioned by *Scaliger* in the book which *Petavius* used, hath been already observed by learned men; whereupon *Vossius* condemns

Petavius

Kircher.

Oed p.

Egypt. Tom.

3. class. 7.

cap. 2.

Bibl. oib.

l. 1. c. 49.

De sphæra

cap. 6.

Bibl. l. 1.

cap. 30.

Geog. l. 17.

Hieroglyph.

l. 1. c. 5.

Petavius of strange incogitancy, because in three editions mentioned by him, *Scaliger's* citation was right; but *Conringius* hath since pleaded in behalf of *Petavius*, that he might make use of the edition of *Cassinius* distinct from the other three; whereby we see how small a matter will beget a feud between learned men, especially where prejudice hath lodged before, as is too evident in *Petavius* his rough dealing on all occasions with that very deserving person *Joseph Scaliger*. But to return, from hence by degrees, the *Egyptians* proceeded to make greater periods of years (as *Eudoxus* carried his *elæcteria* into Greece from the *Canicular* year of the *Egyptians*) they framed from this a greater *Canicular* year, which had as many years as a *Julian* hath dayes; and lastly, the greatest *Canicular* year which comprehended four of the greater, and consisted of a period of 1461 years. But thus we see, that the great periods of years among them rise gradually as they grow more skillfull in the understanding the nature of the year; and that they had anciently no certain periods to govern themselves by in their computation of ancient times. Nay the *Egyptians* have not as appears, any certain Epocha to go by elder then the *Egyptian* years of *Nabonassar*, and afterwards from the death of *Alexander*, and *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, and *Augustus* his victory at *Actium*.

De Idol. l. 1. c. 28.
De ærmet. Med. c. 12.

If from the *Egyptians* we remove our discourse unto the *Grecians*, we are still plunged into greater uncertainties, it being acknowledged by themselves that they had no certain succession of time before the *Olympiads*. To which purpose the Testimony of *Varro* in *Censorinus* is generally taken notice of, distributing time into three parts, reckoning two of them to be unknown and fabulous, and the historical part of time to begin with the first *Olympiad*. Indeed *Scaliger* and some others are loth to reject all that second part of time as fabulous, which was in the interval between *Deucalions* flood and the *Olympiads*: therefore they had rather call it *Heroical*, though much corrupted with *Fables*, and think that it was historical as to persons, but fabulous as to the actions of those persons. But granting this, yet we are wholly to seek for any certain account of the

§. 2.

Not. in Can. 1/0202. l. 3.

the succession of time and persons, for want of some certain *Epocha's*, which like the *Pole-star* should guide us in our passage through that boundless *Ocean* of the *Græcian* history. It must be confessed that some of the learned *Heathens* have taken a great deal of pains this way to find out some certain *periods* to fix on in the time before the *Olympiads*, as *Philocorus*, *Apollodorus*, and *Dionysius Halycarnassensis*, and others, who out of their skill in *Astronomy* sought to bring down some certain intervals between the destruction of *Troy*, and the first *Olympick* game of *Pelops*, restored by *Hercules* and *Atreus*. But granting that their *Epocha's* were fixed and certain, that the destruction of *Troy* was upon the 23 of *Thargelion*, the 11 month of the *Attick* account, and that the *Olympick* game fell out answerably to the ninth of our *July*; and these things were evidently proved from *Astronomical observations*; yet how vast an account of time is lost quite beyond the siege of *Troy*! and besides that, as to all other accidents in the *Intervals* between these two *Epocha's*, which could not be proved by *Celestial observations* concurrent with them, they were left at a very great uncertainty still; only they might guess whether they approached nearer to one *Epocha* than the other: but the *series* of *Families* and their *Generations* (three of which made a *Century* of years) whereby they might come to some conjectures, but could never arrive at any certainty at all.

§. 3.

But that which is most to our purpose, is, that all the *history* of the *Original* of *Greece*, the foundations of their several *Kingdoms*, the succession of their first *Kings*, and all that comes under the name of the history of their ancient times, is clearly given over by their own most skillful *Chronologers*, as matters out of the reach of any clear evidence. Thence come such great differences concerning the antiquity of their ancient *Kingdoms*; the *Argolick* *Kingdom* by *Dionysius Halycarnass.* is supposed to be the eldest, and the *Attick* younger than it by 40 *Generations*, which according to their computation comes to a 1000 years, which is impossible: and yet the *Arcadians*, who gave themselves out to be elder than the *Moon*, are supposed

sed to be younger by him then the *Grasshoppers* of *Athens* by nine *Generations* : and the *Phthiotica* under *Ducalion*, younger then the *Arcadia* by 42 *Generations*, which *Scaliger* might we'll say were impossible and inconsistent. The *Sicyonian* Kingdom is by most supposed to be of greatest antiquity among the *Gracians*, from which *Varro* began his history, as *S. Austin* tells us, and yet as to this, *Pausanias* only reckons the names of some *Kings* there, without any succession of time among them : and yet as to those names, *Africanus* (and *Ensebins* from him) dissent from *Pausanias* ; and which is most observable, *Homer* reckons *Adrastus*, who is the 23 in the account of *Africanus*, to be the first that reigned in *Sicyon*, whose time was after the institution of the *Olympick* game by *Pelops* : of him thus *Homer*,

De Civit.
Dei l. 16.
c. 2.

Καὶ Σικυῶν ὄντας Ἀδρῆστου καὶ ἱμβασιλευν.

Il. 3.

Whereby he expresseth *Adrastus* to be the first *King* of *Sicyon* ; and not as *Scaliger* would interpret it, that *Adrastus* was first *King* of the *Sicyonians* before he was of the *Argives* ; for in the time of *Adrastus* at *Sicyon*, either *Atreus* or *Thyestes* was *King* of the *Argives* ; for in the second year of *Phaestus* and *Adrastus* his supposed Predecessor in *Sicyon*, *Atreus* restored the *Olympick* game of *Pelops* ; in the 41 year of their reign, and they reigned at *Argi* 65 years : Now that *Phaestus* at *Sicyon* is supposed to reign but eight years ; and therefore the reign of *Adrastus* at *Sicyon* falls in with that of *Atreus* and *Thyestes* at *Argi* or *Mycena*. Thus we see now how uncertain the account of times was before the beginning of the *Olympiads* among the *Gracians*, which is fully acknowledged by *Diodorus*, and the very reason given which we here insist on, ὅτι τὸ ὑπὲρ ἑξαπύγματος παραπληρώσεως καὶ τέτων πνεύματος, that there is no certainty in the ancient *Gracian* history, because they had no certain term (which he calls *parapegma*, as others *Epocha*; and *Censorinus* *titulus*) from whence to deduce their accounts. But now from the time by the *Olympiads* (i. e. from the first of them after their restoration of *Iphitus*, wherein the names of the Conquerors were ingraven in *brass* tablets for the purpose) the suc-

De emend. temp. l. 5. Succession of time is most certain and historical among the *Gracians*; by which account we have from thence a certain way of commensurating the sacred and prophane history. All the difficulty is in what year of sacred history the *Olympiads* begin, which *Scaliger* thus finds out. *Censorinus* writes (in the year of Christ 238. which was of the *Julian period* 4951) that, that year was from the first *Olympiad* of *Iphimachus* 1014 the first *Olympiad* was of the *Julian period* 3938. which was according to our learned *Primate A. M.* 3228. and the 35 of *Uzziah King of Judah*, or the 34 as *Capellus* thinks: So that from henceforward we have a clear account of times, which we have demonstrated to have been so uncertain before.

§. 4. If we come from the *Greeks* further into these *European* parts, we shall find as much darkness and obscurity as to ancient times, if not more, then in those already discoursed of. For the truth is, the account of times before the *Romans* in *Italy*, *Germany*, old *Gallia* or *Britain*, are scarce fit to be discoursed of under any head then that of impostures. Not that I think those Nations had lain in a perpetual sleep till the *Romans* waked them into some kind of civility, but that they had no certain way of conveying down the transactions of their own and former times to the view of posterity. On which account we may justly reject all those pretended successions of Kings here in *Britain* from *Gomer* to *Brute* as fabulous: And it will be the less wonder it should be so in those then accounted barbarous Nations, when even those among those were the Planters of knowledge and civility among others, the account of their ancient times is so dark, confused, and uncertain: As it would sufficiently appear to any that would take the pains to examine the succession of the two first *Dynasties* among the *Latins*; the first before *Aeneas* his coming into *Italy*, and the second of the *Aeneadae* after; and certainly it will be sufficient ground to question the account of times before, if in the third *Dynasty*, when the succession seems so clear, and so certain an *Epocha* as the building of *Rome*, to deduce their accounts from their *Chronology* be uncertain, which I shall briefly speak to. For although *Porcius Cato* have

have in *Dionysius* the honour of finding out the first *Palilia* of the City of *Rome* (which was the Feast observed to the honour of the God *Pales*, in the time of which, the foundations of *Rome* were laid) yet there appears no great certainty in his undertaking; for therein he was after contradicted by the learned *Roman Varro*. *Dionysius* tells us that *Cato* found by the *Censors* tables the exact time from the expulsion of the Kings, to the time of the Cities being taken by the *Gauls*; from which time to his own, he could not miss of it from the *Fasti Consulares*; so that it cannot be denied but that *Cato* might have a certain account of times from the *Regifugium* to the time he writ his *Origines*. But what certainty *Cato* could have from the first *Palilia* of the City to the expulsion of *Tarquin*, we cannot understand. For the succession of Kings must needs be very uncertain, unless it be demonstrated from some publick monuments, or certain records, or some publick actions certainly known to have fallen out precisely in such a year of their several Reigns. Now none of these do occur in the *Roman history* in all that Interval from the *Palilia* to the *Regifugium*; so that not only the whole interval, but the time of every particular Kings Reign, are very uncertain. And therefore *Varro* being destitute of any demonstration of that time, had recourse to *L. Tarrutius Firmianus*, to see if by his skill in *Astronomy* he could certainly find out the first *Palilia* of *Rome*: His answer was, that he found that the City was built in the time of an *Eclipse* of the *Sun*, which was in the third year of the sixth *Olympiad*, according to which account *Varro* proceeded, and thence arose the difference between the *Palilia Catoniana* and *Varroniana*; the latter falling out in the 23 of *Iphitus*, the other in the 24. But if we believe *Joseph Scaliger*, there could not be an *Eclipse* *V. d. E.* of the *Sun* at the time affirmed by *Tarrutius*: But yet *mend. Temp.* granting an *Eclipse* of the *Sun* then, what certainty can *l. 5. p. 388.* we have of the succession of the several Kings afterwards, without which there can be no certain computation *ab Urbe Condita*? If then the *Romans*, who had so great advantage of knowing times, and were withall so inquisitive concerning the building of their City (which was a thing of

no very remote distance) could attain to no absolute certainty without it, what certainty can we expect as to an account of *far* antienter times, either from them or others, when they had no *Censorstabes*, nor *Fasti Consulares* to be guided by? And thus much may serve to shew the great uncertainty of *Heathen Chronology*, as to the giving an account of ancient times.

- §. 5. And yet were it only an uncertainty as to *Chronology*, we might better bear with it: for the mistake merely in computation of times were not so dangerous (any further then the credibility of the history depends on the computation, as in point of antiquity) if we were but certain that the persons and actions related of them were such as they are reported to be. But that which adds much to the *confusion and uncertainty of Heathen history*, is, the frequency of *Impositions*, which are more hard to be discovered, in that there are no authentick histories of those times extant, which hath both given occasion to variety of impositions, and much hindered their discovery. For the curiosity of men leading them back into a search after antient times, it makes them exceeding credulous in embracing whatever pretends to give them any conduct through those dark and obscure paths of ancient history: And the world hath never been wanting of such as would be ready to abuse the simple credulity of well-meaning, but less wary men; but those ages have been most *fertile* in the production of such persons, which have pretended to more Learning then they had. The pretence of learning made such persons appear, and the want of it made them not to be discovered. Thus it was not only of old among the *Chaldeans* and *Egyptian Priests*, and the *Grecian Poets* and *Historians*, of whom we have spoken already; but even among those who might have learned more truth from the *Religion* they professed, then to think it stood in need of their lyes. For there can be no greater disparagement offered to truth, then to defend it with any thing but it self, nothing laying truth so open to suspicion, as when falsehood comes to be its *advocate*: And a false testimony discovered, doth more prejudice to a good cause, then it could any wayes ad-

advantage it, were it not discovered ; and therefore their labours have been as serviceable to the world who have discovered *Impostors*, as those who have directly maintained truth against its open opposers, those being so much more dangerous, in that they appear in the disguise of truth, and therefore are with more difficulty discovered. Such a one was that *ignis fatuus* that appeared in a kind of twilight in the *Christian* world between the former darkness of *Barbarism*, and the approaching light of *knowledge* ; I mean *Anninus Viterbiensis*, who like *Hannibal* in passing the *Alps*, not finding a way ready to his mind, sets himself to burning the woods, and firing the rocks, and dissolving them with vinegar to make a passage through them : So *Anninus* being beset in those *snowy* and *gray-headed Alps* of ancient history, and finding no way clear for him according to his fancy, he labours to *burn down* all certain *Records*, to *eat through* the credit of undoubted Authors, to make a more free passage for his own history, which he deduceth suitably to Scripture from the concurrent testimony of the eldest Historians. To which purpose, a *New Berosus*, *Manetho*, *Philo*, *Metasthene*s (as he mistook for *Megasthenes*) and *Xenophon* must put on a grave disguise, and walk abroad the world with a *mantle* of *Antiquity* about their shoulders, although they were nothing else but airy *Phantasms*, covered over with the *Cowl* of the *Monk* of *Viterbo*. For being himself somewhat more versed in the history of those elder times than generally persons were in the age he lived in, he made that unhappy use of his skill, to play the *Monksbank* with his learning ; and to abuse the credulity of those who have better *stomachs* than *palats*, and can sooner swallow down the *compositions* that are given them, than find out the *Ingredients* of them. Thus *Anninus* puts a good face on his *new old Authors*, bids them be bold and confident, and they would fare the better : And the truth is they tell their story so punctually in all circumstances, in those things which had no certain conveyance to posterity, that that were sufficient ground to any intelligent person to question their authority. But lest his Authors should at any time want an *Interpreter* to make out their full meaning, he

sets himself a large Commentary upon them : And certainly he was the fittest person in the world to do it ; for *cujus est condere, ejus est interpretari* ; none so fit to explain *Annins*, as *Annins* himself. The whole story of this Imposture, how he made the Inscriptions himself, and hid them under ground, how they were digged thence and brought to *Annins* ; how *Annins* caused them to be sent to the *Magistrates*, and after published them in the *equipage* they are *Dialog. 11.* in, are at large related by that learned *Bishop Antonius Augustinus*, from *Latinus Latinus*.

§. 6. From a like quarry to this, came out those other famous *Inscriptions*, walking under the specious title of *Antiquitatum Etruscarum fragmenta*, wherein, besides many palpable incongruities to the customs of those eldest times, discovered partly by *Leo Allatius* in his discourse concerning them, there are so many particular stories and circumstances related concerning *Noah's* being in *Italy*, and other things, so far beyond any probability of reason, that it is a wonder there are yet any persons pretending to learning, who should build their discourses upon such rotten and sandy foundations as these *Inscriptions* are. But though *Ixion* might, *Jupiter* would never have been deceived with a *Cloud* instead of *Juno* ; so, though persons unacquainted with the lineaments of *truth*, may be easily imposed on with appearances instead of her ; yet such persons who have sagacity enough to discern the air of her countenance from the faint of forgeries, will never suffer themselves to be over-reached by such vain pretenders. But these *Impostors* are like the *Astrologers* at *Rome*, ever banished, and yet ever there ; and so these are ever exploded by all lovers of *truth*, yet always find some to applaud and entertain them : Although it be more difficult to do so now in the present light of *knowledge*, and all advantages for *learning*, then it was in those elder times, when the *Heathen Priests* pretended to the *Monopoly* of *Learning* among themselves, and made it one of their great designs to keep all others in dependence on themselves, thereby to keep up their *reverence* the better among the people. And therefore all the *Records* they had of *Learning* or *History*,
were

were carefully lockt up, and preserved among the *Priests*; and lest at any time others might get a view of them, they were sure to preserve them in a peculiar Character distinct from that in civil and common use. By which means the *Heathen Priests* had all imaginable opportunities and conveniencies for deceiving the silly people, and thereby keeping them in an obsequious ignorance, which is never the Mother of any true Devotion, but of the greatest Superstition.

It is well known of the *Egyptian Priests*, that the sacred Characters of their Temples were seldom made known to any but such as were of their own number and family, (the Priesthood being there hereditary) or such others as by long converse had insinuated themselves into their society, as some of the *Greek Philosophers* and *Historians* had done: And yet we have some reason to think they were not over-free and communicative to some of them, by the slender account they give of several things, which are supposed to be well known among the *Egyptians*. That the *Phœnician Priests* had their peculiar and sacred Characters too, is evident from the words of *Philo Biblus* concerning *Sanchoniathon*, if we take *Bochartus* his Exposition of them: He tells us that his History was compared τῷς ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς ἀσπί- Euseb. τῶν ἱερῶν, ἀποκρίσεις Ἀμμωνίων χαρμμάτων ἀ ἐκ τῶν παλαιῶν, Prap. Evangel. l. 1. c. 10. with the Inscriptions in the Temples written in the Ammonian letters, which are known to few: *Litera Ammoneorum* (saith *Bochartus*) sunt *litera Templorum*, *litera in sacris excepta*. For *𐤋𐤍* is the *Sun*, thence *𐤋𐤍* the Temple of the *Sun*, whom the *Phœnicians* worshipped as their principal Deity, under the name of *Beel-samen*, the Lord of Heaven. The same Author tells us out of *Diogenes Laertius*, of a Book of *Democritus*, οὗ ἐστὶ ἐκ Βαβυλωνίων ἱερῶν χαρμμάτων, by which it is evident that the *Babylonian Priests* had their sacred Characters too: And of a Testimony of *Theodoret* of all the *Græcian Temples*, ἐκ τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν ναῶν ἰδοὺ τὰς παλαιὰς χαρμμάτων, ὡς ἱερὰ καὶ ἁγία, that they had some peculiar Characters which were called sacred. But that learned Author thinks there is no necessity of understanding it peculiarly of the *Græcians*, because the *Greek Pa-* others

§. 7

Diod. l. 3.

Euseb. Prap. Evangel. l. 1. c. 10.

Geog. sacr. p. 2. l. 2. c. 17.

Quæst. in Gen. 613.

thers called all *Heathens* by the name of *Greeks*; but if so, the Testimony is the larger, and amounts to an universal Testimony of the *Heathen Temples*.

§. 8.

Neither was this only peculiar to them, if we believe some persons of greater *Learning* than *Judgement*, who attribute this distinction of *sacred* and *vulgar Characters* to the *Jews* as well as others, but without any probability of reason. For these learned men being strongly possessed with the opinion of the *modern Jews* concerning the *Antiquity* of the present *Hebrew Characters*, and finding themselves pressed not only with the *Testimony* of some *ancient Rabbins*, but with the stronger evidence of the *ancient Sticks* about *Solomons* time, inscribed with the *Samaritan letters*, have at last found this *Evasion*, that the *Samaritan letters* were in *vulgar use*; but the present *Characters* were then *sacred*, and not made *common* till after the time of the *Captivity*. But this seems to be a meer *shift* found out by some *modern Jews*, and greedily embraced by their Followers, because thereby they are in hopes to evade the strength of the contrary arguments, which otherwise they can find no probable solution of. And a meer *shift* it will appear to be, to any one that considers on how little ground of reason it stands: For none of those reasons which held for such a distinction of Characters among the *Heathens*, can have any place among the *Jews*. For it was never any part of *Gods* design to have the Law kept from the peoples view. *Truth* is never so fearful of being *seen abroad*; it is only falsehood that walks under disguises, and must have its hiding-places to retreat to: Nay, *God* expressly commanded it as a duty of all the *Jews*, to search and study his Law, which they could not do, if it were locked up from them in an *unknown Character*. Did not *God* himself promulge it among the people of *Israel* by the *Ministry of Moses*? did he not command it to be as *frontlets between their eyes*, and *signs upon their hands* (not that *Phylacteries* should be made of the Law to wear, as the *Pharisees* interpreted it, and others from them have mistaken) but that they should have the *Law* in continual remembrance, as if it were always between their eyes, and ingraven upon their hands.

Exod. 13.

16.

Deut. 6.8.

Again

Again, if we suppose the *Law* to be among the people, but in the *vulgar Character*, I would fain know, what *sanctity*, *majesty*, and *authority*, there was in that *character* more than in the words and matter? and if there were, how comes the *vulgar* use of it to be nowhere forbidden? and how durst *Ezra*, as is supposed, after the *Captivity*, profane so *sacred* a thing by exposing it to *Common* use? But granting them yet further, that it was *lawful*, but not *useful* to make use of that *sacred Character*; I demand then, how comes that *disuse* to continue so punctually till the time of *Ezra*, and that it should never be divulged before? when there was so great reason to make it common, since the *square letters* are less operose, more expedite and facile, then the *Samaritan*, which is, when time serves, used as a plea for their great *Antiquity*. But yielding yet more, that the *Sacred Character* was only used for the *authentick copy* of the *Law*, which was to decide all differences of other coppies (which some run to as their last shift) I appeal to any mans *reason*, whether this be not the most improbable of all? For how could such a copy be the *Judge* of all others, which could not be read or understood by those who appealed to it? Or was the knowledge and reading of this *character* peculiar to the *High-Priest*; and conveyed down as a *Cabala* from one to another? but how many incongruities would follow hence, in case one *High Priest* should dye before his son was capable of understanding the letters, and so that *Sacred* treasure must needs be lost! or had they it all by *inspiration*, and understood the *Sacred Character* by *Urim* and *Thummim*? Thus every way, this opinion among the *Jews* is pressed with inconveniencies, but it was most suitable to the *Heathen Priests* to maintain a *Mum* and *Thum* between their own *Character* and the vulgar. For hereby they prohibited all prying into their mysteries by any, but those who had the same *Interest* with themselves, and therefore were unlikely to discover any thing that might lessen their reputation. Whereas, had there been nothing but *Truth* in their records, or that *Truth* had been for their *Interest*, what need had there been of so great reservedness and privacy? but when the discovery of truth would

undecieve the world, it was their *Interest* to lock it up, and to give out such things to the *vulgar*, which might advance themselves and please them ; which *artifices* of theirs give no small ground to *Question* the *credibility* of their *Histories*.

§.9.

Especially if we add what we promised in the *last place*, to shew the want of *credibility* in the report of ancient times among them, which was not only *defectiveness*, and *uncertainty*, but *apparent partiality* to themselves, and *inconsistency* with each other. How evident is it in all these Nations we have spoken to, how much they strive to *inhanse* the *reputation* of their own Nation, and to that end blend the *History* of other Nations with their own, to make theirs seem the greater ? How much do the *Egyptians* tell us of the excellency of their ancient *Laws* and *Government* ? and yet how evident is it, from their own *Histories*, that no such *Laws* were observed by their *Kings* as they speak of ? Can we think that such *Kings* as *Chemmis* and the rest of them, who built those vast structures of the *Pyramids*, and employed *myriads* of men for so many years for the doing of them, would be content to be so dieted by their *Laws*, as *Hercatans* and *Diodorns* tell us they were to be ? Nay it seems to be very suspicious, that the great enterprises of their famous *Sesoosis* are merely *fabulous*, and some think an attributing to themselves, what was done by the *Assyrian Emperor* in his time. By which we may guess, what to think of the great *Conquests* of *Osiris* and *Isis*, and their subduing almost the whole world to them. And it is most evident how partial the *Egyptians* are in dissembling their greatest losses ; as is clear in the story of the *Conquest* of *Pharao Neco* by *Nebuchadnezzar*, Jer. 46. 12. of which there is not the least mention in *Herodotus* or *Diodorns* ; But on the contrary, *Herodotus* tells us this *Necos*, as he calls him, conquered the *Syrians* at *Magdalos* ; and the story of *Vaphres* and *Amasis* in him seems to be only a disguise of *Nebuchadnezzars* *Conquest* : only lest men should think them conquered by a *Forraigner*, they make *Amasis* to be an *Egyptian Plebeian*. Again, what a vast number *Biblioth.l.i.* of *Cities* doth *Diodorns* tell us of that were in *Egypt* in their

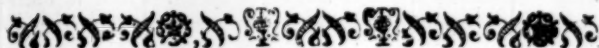
Lib. 2.

their eldest times? no less than 18000. when yet himself confesseth in the time of *Ptolomæus Lagi* there were reckoned but somewhat above 3000. Cities, and then *Agypt* was the most populous that ever it had been. How probable doth this sound, that in those eldest times such vast multitudes of Cities should be erected? But the truth is, it is not unsuitable to their opinion of the production of the first men, which were caused, say they, by the heat of *Sun*, and the mud of *Nilus*; and it is certain then they might be the most populous Nation in the world: for there could be no defect as to either efficient or material cause, there being mud enough to produce *Myriads*, and the *Sun* hot enough to impregnate it. The partiality of other Nations hath been already discoursed of in our passage; and so likewise hath their mutual repugnancy to, and inconsistency with each other: Which yet might be more fully manifested from the contradictions in reference to the *Egyptian History* between *Manetho*, *Herodotus*, *Diodorus*, *Dicaarchus*, *Eratosthenes*, and all who have spoken of it: as to the *Assyrian Empire* between *Herodotus*, *Diodorus*, and *Julius Africanus*; as to the *Persian Empire* between *Herodotus* and *Ctesias*, and those in no inconsiderable things, as is evident in *Photius* his excerpts out of him. Among the *Gracians* we have already discovered it as to their *History* and *Geography*; and if we should enter into their *Theology*, and the *History* of that, we should find their other differences inconsiderable, if compared with these. Of which we may partly make a conjecture by the incredible spight that is born by the gravest *Greek Authors*, as *Strabo*, *Plutarch*, and others, towards *Enumæus Siculus*, for offering to deliver the *History* of *Jupiter*, which he saith, he transcribed from the golden pillar in the Temple of *Jupiter Triphyllius* in *Panctetis*.

But I suppose enough hath been discovered already, to prove that there is no credibility in any of those *Heathen Histories*, which pretend to give an account of ancient times, there being in all of them so much defect

and insufficiency, so great uncertainty and confusion, so much partiality and inconsistency with each other. It remains now that I proceed to demonstrate the credibility of that account of ancient times, which is reported in the Sacred Scriptures, which will be the second part of our Task.

Book



BOOK II.

CHAP. I.

The certainty of the Writings of *Moses*.

In order to the proving the truth of *Scripture* history, several Hypotheses laid down. The first concerns the reasonableness of preserving the ancient History of the world in some certain Records, from the importance of the things, and the inconveniences of meer tradition or constant Revelation. The second concerns the certainty that the Records under *Moses* his name, were undoubtedly his. The certainty of a matter of fact enquired into in general, and proved as to this particular by universal consent, and settling a Commonwealth upon his Laws. The impossibility of an Imposture as to the writings of *Moses* demonstrated. The pleas to the contrary largely answered.



Having sufficiently demonstrated the want of credibility in the account of ancient times, given by those Nations who have made the greatest pretence to Learning and Antiquity in the world, we now proceed to evince the credibility and certainty of that account which is given us in sacred

§. I.

Scriptures: In order to which I shall premise these following Hypotheses.

It stands to the greatest reason, that an account of things so concerning and remarkable, should not be always left to the uncertainty of an oral tradition; but should be timely entered

Hyp. 1.

into certain Records, to be preserved to the memory of posterity. For it being of concernment to the world, in order to the establishment of belief as to future things, to be fully settled in the belief that all things past were managed by Divine providence, there must be some certain Records of former ages, or else the mind of man will be perpetually hovering in the greatest uncertainties: Especially where there is such a mutual dependance and concatenation of one thing with another, as there is in all the Scripture-history. For take away but any one of the main foundations of the *Mosaical history*, all the *superstructure* will be exceedingly weakened, if it doth not fall quite to the ground. For mans obligation to obedience unto God, doth necessarily suppose his original to be from him; his hearkening to any proposals of favour from God, doth suppose his *Apostacy* and fall; Gods designing to shew mercy and favour to fallen man, doth suppose that there must be some way whereby the *Great Creator* must reveal himself as to the conditions on which fallen man may expect a recovery; the revealing of these conditions in such a way whereon a *superficious* (because guilty) creature may firmly rely, doth suppose so certain a recording of them, as may be least liable to any suspicion of imposture or deceit. For although nothing else be in its self necessary from God to man, in order to his salvation, but the bare revealing in a certain way the terms on which he must expect it; yet considering the undoubted nature of *Divine goodness*, respecting not only the good of some particular persons, but of the whole society of mankind, it stands to the greatest reason that such a revelation should be so propounded, as might be with equal certainty conveyed to the community of mankind. Which could not with any such evidence of credibility be done by private and particular revelations (which give satisfaction only to the inward senses of the partakers of them) as by a publick recording of the matters of *Divine revelation* by such a person who is enabled to give the world all reasonable satisfaction, that what he did was not of any private design of his own head, but that he was deputed to it by no less then

Divine

Divine authority. And therefore it stands to the highest reason, that where *Divine Revelation* is necessary for the certain requiring of assent, the matter to be believed should have a certain uniform conveyance to mens minds, rather than that perpetually *New revelations* should be required for the making known of those things; which being once recorded are not lyable to so many impostures as the other way might have been under pretended *Revelations*. For then men are not put to a continual tryal of every person pretending *Divine revelation*, as to the evidences which he brings of *Divine authority* but the great matters of concernment being already recorded and attested by all rational evidence as to the truth of the things, their minds therein rest satisfied without being under a continual hesitancy, lest the *Revelation* of one should contradict another.

For supposing that God had left the matters of *Divine revelation* unrecorded at all, but left them to be discovered in every age by a *Spirit of Prophecy*, by such a multitude as might be sufficient to inform the world of the truth of the things; We cannot but conceive that an innumerable company of croaking *Enthusiasts* would be continually pretending commissions from heaven, by which the minds of men would be left in continual distraction, because they would have no certain infallible rules given them, whereby to difference the good and evil spirit from each other. But now supposing God to inspire some particular persons, not only to reveal, but to record *Divine truths*, then whatever evidences can be brought attesting a *Divine Revelation* in them, will likewise prove the undoubted certainty and infallibility of those writings, it being impossible that persons employed by a God of truth should make it their design to impose upon the world; which gives us a rational account, why the wise God did not suffer the *History* of the world to lye still unrecorded, but made choice of such a person to record it, who gave abundant evidence to the world that he acted no private design, but was peculiarly employed by God himself for the doing of it, as will appear afterwards. Besides, we finde by our former discourse, how lyable the most certain tradition is to be corrupted in progress of time, where there
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are no standing records, though it were at first delivered by persons of undoubted credit. For we have no reason to doubt, but that the *tradition* of the *old world*; the *flood* and the *consequences* of it, with the *nature* and *worship* of the *true God*, were at first spread over the greatest part of the world in its first plantations, yet we see how soon for want of certain conveyance, all the antient tradition was corrupted and abused into the greatest Idolatry. Which might be less wondered at, had it been only in those parts which were furthest remote from the seat of those grand transactions; but thus we find it was even among those families, who had the nearest residence to the place of them, and among those persons who were not far off in a lineal descent from the persons mainly concerned in them; as is most evident in the family out of which *Abraham* came (who was himself the tenth from *Noah*) yet of them it is said, *that they served other Gods*. How unlikely then was it, that this tradition should be afterwards preserved entire, when the people God had peculiarly chosen to himself, were so mixed among the *Egyptians*, and so prone to the *Idolatries* of the Nations round about them, and that even after God had given them a written Law attested with the greatest miracles? what would they have done then, had they never been brought forth of *Egypt* by such signs and wonders, and had no certain records left to preserve the memory of former ages? Thus we see how much it stands to the greatest reason, that so memorable things should be digested into sacred records.

§. 3. We have as great certainty that *Moses* was the author of the records going under his name, as we can have of any matter of fact done at so great a distance of time from us. We are to consider that there are two very distinct questions to be thought of concerning a Divine revelation to any person at a considerable distance of time from us; and those are what evidences can be given that the matters recorded are of a true divine revelation; and what evidence we have of the truth of the matter of fact, that such things were recorded by such persons. They who do not carefully distinguish between these two questions, will soon run themselves into an inextricable

tricable labyrinth, when they either seek to understand themselves, or explain to others the grounds on which they believe the *Scriptures* to be the *Word of God*. The first step in order to which must be the proving the *undoubted certainty of the matter of fact*, or the truth of the History, that such persons were really existent, and did either do or record the things we speak of: After this, succeeds the other to prove, not only the *real existence* of the things, but that the persons who recorded the things were assisted by an *infallible spirit*; then there can be no reason at all to doubt, but those records are the *Word of God*. The first of these, is, that which at present we enquire after, the certainty of the matter of fact, that the records under the name of *Moses* were undoubtedly his. And here it will be most unreasonable for any to seek for further evidence and demonstration of it, then the matter to be proved is capable of. But if they should, I suppose we have sufficient reason to demonstrate the folly of such a demand, and that on these accounts.

1. Whoever yet undertook to bring matters of fact into *Mathematical demonstrations*, or thought he had ground to question the certainty of any thing that was not proved in a *Mathematical* way to him? Who would ever undertake to prove that *Archimedes* was kild at *Syracuse* by any of the *demonstrations* he was then about? or that *Euclide* was the undoubted Author of the *Geometry* under his name? or do men question these things for want of such *demonstrations*? Yet this is all we at present desire, but the same liberty here which is used in any thing of a like nature.

2. I demand of the person who denies this *moral certainty* to be sufficient for an assent, whether he doth question every thing in the world, which he was not present at the doing of himself? If he be peremptorily resolved to believe nothing but what he sees, he is fit for nothing but a voyage to *Anticyra*, or to be soundly purged with *Hellebore* to free him from those cloudy humours that make him suspect the whole world to be an *Imposture*. But we cannot suppose any man so destitute of reason, as to question the truth of every matter of fact which he doth not see himself; if he doth

doth then *firmly believe* any thing, there must be supposed sufficient *grounds* to induce him to such a belief. And then what ground can there be to question the *certainly* of such things which have as great evidence as any of those things have which he most firmly believes ? and this is all we desire from him.

3. 3. Do we not see that the most *concerning* and *weighty* *actions* of mens *lives*, are built on no other foundation than this *moral certainty* ? yet men do not in the least question the truth of the thing they rely upon : As is most evident in all *titles* to *estates* derived from *Ancestors*, either by *donation* or *purchase* : In all *trading* which goes upon the *moral certainty*, that there are such places as the *Indies*, or *France*, or *Spain*, &c. In all *journeys*, that there is such a place, as that I am going to, and this is the way thither ; for these we have but this *moral certainty* ; for the *contrary* to both these are *possible*, and the *affirmatives* are *indemonstrable*. In *eating* and *drinking* there is a *possibility* of being poisoned by every bit of meat or drop of drink ; do we therefore continually doubt, whether we shall be so or no ? *Chiefly* this is seen in all *natural affection* and piety in *Children* towards *Parents*, which undoubtedly suppose the truth of that, which it was *impossible* they could be *witnesses* of themselves ; viz. *their coming out of their Mothers wombs*. And doth any one think this sufficient ground to question his mother, because the contrary is impossible to be demonstrated to him ? In short, then, either we must destroy all *Historical faith* out of the world, and believe nothing (though never so much attested) but that we see our selves, or else we must acknowledge, that a *moral certainty* is a *sufficient foundation* for an *undoubted assent*, not such a one *cui non potest subesse falsum*, but such a one *cui non subest dubium*, i. e. an *assent undoubted*, though not *infallible*. By which we see what little reason the *Atheist* on one side can have to question the *truth* of the *Scriptures*, to the *History* of it ; and what little ground the *Papists* on the other side have to make a *pretence* of the *necessity* of *infallibility*, as to the *proposal* of such things where *moral certainty* is *sufficient*, that is, to the *matter of fact*.

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Which I now come to prove, as to the subject in hand; viz. that the writings of Moses are undoubtedly his, which I prove by a twofold argument: 1. *An universal consent of persons who were best able to know the truth of the things in question.* 2. *The settling of a Common wealth upon the Laws delivered by Moses.* 1. *The universal Consent of persons most capable of judging in the Case in hand.* I know nothing the most scrupulous and inquisitive mind can possibly desire in order to satisfaction, concerning any matter of fact beyond an *universal Consent* of such persons who have a greater capacity of knowing the truth of it than we can have. And those are all such persons who have lived nearest those times when the things were done, and have best understood the affairs of the times when the things were pretended to be done. Can we possibly conceive, that among the people of the *Jews*, who were so exceedingly prone to transgress the *Law of Moses*, and to fall into *Idolatry*, but if there had been any the least suspicion of any falsity or imposture in the writing of *Moses*, the ringleaders of their revolts would have sufficiently promulged it among them, as the most plausible plea to draw them off from the worship of the true God? Can we think that a Nation and religion so maligned as the *Jewish* were, could have escaped discovery, if there had been any deceit in it, when so many lay in wait continually to expose them to all *Contumelies* imaginable? Nay, among themselves in their frequent *Apostacies*, and occasions given for such a pretence, how comes this to be never heard of, nor in the least questioned, whether the *Law* was undoubtedly of *Moses* his writing or no? What an excellent plea would this have been for *Jeroboams Calves* in *Dan* and *Bethel*; for the *Samaritans Temple* on *Mount Gerizim*, could any the least suspicion have been raised among them concerning the *authentickness* of the *fundamental records* of the *Jewish Commonwealth*? And which is most observable, the *Jews* who were a people strangely suspicious and incredulous, while they were seduced and clothed with miracles, yet could never find ground to question this. Nay, and *Moses* himself, we plainly see, was hugely envied by many of the *Israelites* even in the wilderness, as is evident

in the *Conspiracy* of *Corah* and his complices; and that on this very ground *that he took too much upon him*; how unlikely then is it, that amidst so many enemies he should dare to venture any thing into *publick records*, which was not most *undoubtedly true*; or undertake to prescribe a *Law* to oblige the people to posterity? Or that after his own age any thing should come out under his name, which would not be presently detected by the *emulators* of his glory? What then, is the thing it self *incredible*? surely *not*, that *Moses* should write the records we speak of. Were not they able to understand the *truth* of it? What? not those, who were in the same age, and conveyed it down by a certain tradition to posterity? Or did not the *Israelites* all constantly *believe* it? What? not they who would sooner part with their *lives* and *fortunes*, then admit any *variation* or *alteration* as to their *Law*?

§. 3. Well, but if we should suppose the *whole Jewish Nation* partial to themselves, and that out of honour to the memory of so great a person as *Moses*, they should attribute their ancient *Laws* and records to him: Which is all that *Infidelity* its self can imagine in this Case: Yet this cannot be with any shadow of reason pretended. For,

1. Who were those persons, who did give out this *Law* to the *Jews* under *Moses* his name? Certainly they, who undertake to contradict that which is received by common consent, must bring stronger and clearer evidence than that on which that consent is grounded, or else their exceptions deserve to be rejected with the highest indignation. What proof can be then brought, that not only the *Jewish Nation*, but the whole *Christian world* hath been so lamentably *befooled* to believe those things with an undoubted assent, which are only the contrivances of some cunning men?

2. At what time could these things be contrived? Either while the memory of *Moses* and his actions were remaining, or afterwards. First, how could it possibly be, when his memory was remaining? for then all things were so fresh in their memories, that it was impossible a thing of this universal nature

nature could be forged of him. If after, then I demand, whether the people had observed the *Law* of *Moses* before or no? If *not*, then they must certainly know it at the time of its promulgation to be counterfeit, for had it been from *Moses*, it would have been observed before their times; if it was observed before, then either continually down from the time of *Moses*, or not? If continually down, then it was of *Moses* his doing, if we suppose him to have had that authority among the people which the objection supposeth: if *not*, then still the nearer *Moses* his time, the more difficult such a counterfeiting could be; because the *Constitutions* which *Moses* had left among them, would have remained in their memories, whereby they would easily reject all pretences and counterfeits.

3. How can we conceive the Nation of the *Jews* would have ever embraced such a *Law*, had it not been of *Moses* his enacting among them in that state of time when he did? For then the people were in fittest capacity to receive a *Law*, being grown a great people, and therefore necessary to have *Laws*; newly delivered from bondage, and therefore wanting *Laws* of their own; and entering into a settled state of Commonwealth; which was the most proper season of giving *Laws*.

These considerations make it so clear, that it is almost impossible to conceive the Nation of the *Jews* could have their *Laws* given to them but at the time of their being in the wilderness, before they were settled in *Canaan*. For suppose we at present, to gratify so far the objection, that these *Laws* were brought forth long after the constitution of the government and the national settlement, under *Moses* his name; how improbable, nay how impossible is it to alter the fundamental *Laws* of a Nation after long settlement? what confusion of interests doth this bring? what disturbance among all sorts of people, who must be dispossessed of their rights, and brought to such strange unwonted customs so seemingly against their interests, as many of the *Constitutions* among the *Jews* were? For can we imagine that a people always devoted to their own interest, would after it had been quietly settled in their land, by *Constitutions* after the custom of

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§. 6.

other Nations, presently under a pretence of a copy of *Laws* found (that were pretended to be given by one in former ages of great esteem, called *Moses*) throw open all their former inclosures, and part with their former *Laws* for these of which they have no evidence, but the words of those that told it them? We have a clear instance for this among the *Romans*; although there were great evidence given of the undoubted certainty, that the books found in *Numa's* grave by *Petilius* were his, yet because they were adjudged by the *Senate* to be against the present *Laws*, they were without further enquiry adjudged to be burnt. Was not here the greatest likelihood that might be, that these should have taken place among the *Romans*, for the great veneration for wisdom which *Numa* was in among them, and the great evidence that these were certain remainders of his, wherein he gave a true account of the superstitions in use among them? yet lest the state should be unsettled by it, they were prohibited so much as a publick view, when the *Prator* had sworn they were against the established *Laws*. Can we then conceive the Jewish Nation would have embraced so burdensome and ceremonious a Law as *Moses's* was, had it been brought among them in such a way as the books of *Numa*, though with all imaginable evidence, that it was undoubtedly his, especially when they were engaged to the observation of some *Laws* or customs already, by which their Commonwealth had been established? And withall these *Laws* of *Moses* seeming so much against the interest and good husbandry of a Nation, as all the neighbour Nations thought, who for that accused them to be an idle and slothful people, as they judged by their resting wholly one day in seven, the great and many solemn feasts they had, the repairing of all the males to Jerusalem thrice a year, the Sabbathical years, years of Jubilee, &c. These things were apparently against the interest of such a Nation, whose great subsistence was upon pasturage and agriculture. So that it is evident these *Laws* respected not the outward interest of the Nation, and so could not be the contrivance of any Politicians among them, but did immediately aim at the honour of the God whom they served, for whom they were to part even with

with their *civil interests* : The doing of which by a people generally taken notice of for a particular *Love* of their own *concernments*, is an *impregnable argument* these *Laws* could not take place among them, had they not been given by *Moses* at the time of their *unsettlement*, and that their future *settlement* did depend upon their present *observation* of them ; which is an evidence too that they could be of no less then *divine original* : Which was more then I was to prove at present.

4 Were not these writings undoubtedly *Moses's* ; whence should the *neighbour Nations* about the *Jews* notwithstanding the hatred of the *Jewish religion*, retain so venerable an opinion of the *wisdom* of *Moses* ? The *Egyptians* accounted him one of their *Priests*, (which notes the esteem they had of his learning) as appears by the *testimonies* produced out of *Charemon* and *Manetho* by *Josephus*. *C. App. l. 1. Bib. l. 1. Geog. 16. De sublim.*
Diodorus Siculus speaks of him with great respect among the famous *Legislators*, and so doth *Strabo*, who speaks in commendation of the Religion established by him. The testimony of *Longinus* is sufficiently known, that *Moses* was no man of any vulgar wit (*ὁ δὲ πρῶτος ἀνὴρ*) *Chalcidius* calls him *sapientissimus Moses* (although I must not dissemble that *Chalcidius* hath been, I think, undeservedly reckoned among *heathen writers*, though he comments on *Plato's Timæus*, it being most probable that he was a *Christian Platonist*, which might more probably make *Vaninus* call him *circumforaneum blateronem*) but though we exempt *Chalcidius* out of the number of those *Heathens*, who have born testimony to the *wisdom* of *Moses*, yet there are number enough besides him produced by *Justin Martyr*, *Cyril*, and others, whose evidence is clear and full to make us undoubtedly believe, that there could never have been so universal and uninterrupted a tradition concerning the *writings* and *Laws* of *Moses*, had they not been certainly his, and conveyed down in a continual succession from his time to our present age. Which will be yet more clear, if we consider in the second place, that the *national constitution* and *settlement* of the *Jews*, did depend on the truth of the *Laws* and *writings* of *Moses*. Can we have more undoubted evidence, that

that there were such persons as *Solon*, *Lycurgus*, and *Numa*, and that the *Laws* bearing their names were theirs; then the *History* of the several *Commonwealths* of *Athens*, *Sparta*, and *Rome*, who were governed by those *Laws*? When *writings* are not of *general concernment*, they may be more easily *counterfeited*; but when they concern the *rights*, *privileges*, and *governments* of a *Nation*, there will be enough whose *interest* will lead them to *prevent impostures*. It is no easie matter to *forge a Magna Charta* and to *invent Laws*; *mens caution and prudence* is never so *quick sighted* as in *matters* which concern their *estates* and *freeholds*. The *general interest* lyes contrary to such *impostures*, and therefore they will prevent their obtaining among them. Now the *Laws* of *Moses* are *incorporated* into the very *Republiſh* of the *Jews*, and their *ſubſiſtence* and *Government* depends upon them, their *Religion* and *Laws* are ſo *interwoven* one with the other, that one cannot be broken off from the other. Their *right* to their *temporal poſſeſſions* in the land of *Canaan* depends on their owning the *Sovereignty* of *God* who gave them to them; and on the truth of the *History* recorded by *Moses* concerning the *promiſes* made to the *Patriarchs*. So that on that account it was *impoſſible* thoſe *Laws* ſhould be *counterfeit* on which the welfare of a *Nation* depended, and according to which they were governed ever ſince they were a *Nation*. So that I ſhall now take it to be ſufficiently proved, that the *writings* under the name of *Moses* were *undoubtedly his*; for none, who are knowledge the *Laws* to have been his, can have the face to deny the *History*, there being ſo neceſſary a *connexion* between them; and the *book* of *Genſis* being nothing elſe but a *general and very neceſſary introduction* to that which follows.

CHAP. II.

Moses his certain knowledge of what he writ.

The third Hypothesis concerns the certainty of the matter of Moses his history; that gradually proved: First, Moses his knowledge cleared, by his education, and experience, and certain information. His education in the wisdom of Egypt; what that was. The old Egyptian learning enquired into; the conveniences for it. Of the Egyptian Priests. Moses reckoned among them for his knowledge. The Mathematical, Natural, Divine, and Moral learning of Egypt: their Political wisdom most considerable. The advantage of Moses above the Greek Philosophers, as to wisdom and reason. Moses himself an eye-witness of most of his history: the certain uninterrupted tradition of the other part among the Jews, manifested by rational evidence.

HAVING thus far cleared our way, we come to the third §. 1. Hypothesis, which is, *There are as manifest proofs of Hyp. 3. the undoubted truth and certainty of the History recorded by Moses, as any can be given concerning any thing which we yield the firmest assent unto.* Here it must be considered, that we proceed in a way of rational evidence to prove the truth of the thing in hand, as to which, if in the judgement of impartial persons the arguments produced be strong enough to convince an unbiassed mind; it is not material, whether every railing *Atheist* will sit down contented with them. For usually persons of that inclination rather than judgement, are more resolved against light, than inquisitive after it; and rather seek to stop the chinks at which any light might come in, then open the windows for the free and cheerful entertainment of it. It will certainly be sufficient to make it appear, that no man can deny the truth of that part of *Scripture* which we are now speaking of, without offering manifest violence to his own faculties, and making it appear

appear to the world, that he is one wholly forsaken of his own reason : which will be satisfactorily done, if we can clear these things ; *First, that it was morally impossible Moses should be ignorant of the things he undertook to write of, and so be deceived himself. Secondly, That it was utterly impossible he should have any design in deceiving others in reporting it. Thirdly, That it is certain from all rational evidence, that he hath not deceived the world, but that his History is undoubtedly true.* First, *That it was morally impossible Moses should be deceived himself, or be ignorant of the things which he writ of.* Two things are requisite to prevent a man being deceived himself. *First, That he be a person of more than ordinary judgement, wisdom, and knowledge. Secondly, That he have sufficient information concerning the things he undertakes to write of.* If either of these two be wanting, it is possible for a man of integrity to be deceived ; for an honest heart hath not alwayes an *Urim* and *Thummim* upon it ; nor is fidelity alwayes furnished with the acutest intellectuals. The simplicity of the Dove is as lyable to be deceived its self, as the subtilty of the serpent is to deceive others ; but where the wisdom of the serpent is, to prevent being deceived, and the Doves innocency in not deceiving others, there are all the qualifications can be desired in any one who undertakes only to tell the Truth. First, *Then that Moses was a person of a great understanding, and sufficiently qualified to put a difference between truth and falsehood,* will appear ; first, *from the ingenuity of his education ; secondly, from the ripeness of his judgement and greatness of his experience when he penned these things.*

First, We begin with his education. And here we require at present no further assent to be given to what is reported concerning *Moses in Scripture*, then what we give to *Plutarchs lives*, or any other relations concerning the actions of persons who lived in former ages. Two things then we find recorded in *Scripture* concerning *Moses* his education ; *that he was brought up in the Court of Egypt, and that he was skild in all the learning of the Egyptians ; and these two will abundantly prove the ingenuity of his education, viz. That he was a person both conversant in civil affairs,*
and

Heb 11 25
Act 7 22.

and acquainted with the abstruser parts of all the *Egyptian* wisdom.

And I confess there is nothing to me which doth advance so much the repute of the ancient *Egyptian Learning*, as that the *Spirit of God* in Scripture should take so much notice of it, as to set forth a person (otherwise renowned for greater accomplishments) by his *skill* in this. For if it be below the *wisdom* of any ordinary person, to set forth a person by that which in its self is no matter of commendation, how much less can we imagine it to that infinite wisdom which inspired *Stephen* in that *Apology* which he makes for himself against the *Libertines*, which charged him with contempt of *Moses* and the *Law*? And therefore certainly this was some very observable thing, which was brought in as a singular commendation of *Moses*, by that person whose design was to make it appear how high an esteem he had of him. And thence it appears that *Learning* is not only in its self a great accomplishment of humane nature, but that it ought to be looked upon with veneration, even in those who have excellencies of a higher nature to commend them. If a *Pearl* retains its excellency when it lyes upon a *dunghill*, it can certainly lose nothing of its lustre by being set in a crown of gold: if *Learning* be commendable in an *Egyptian*, it is no less in *Moses*, where it is enameled with more noble perfections, then of its self it can reach unto. All the question is, Whither the ancient learning of the *Egyptians* was such as might be supposed to improve the reason and understanding of men to such an height, as thereby to make them more capable of putting a difference between truth and falsehood? Whether it were such an overflowing *Nile* as would enrich the understandings of all those who were in a capacity to receive its streams? The truth is, there want not grounds of suspicion, that the old *Egyptian Learning* was not of that elevation which the present distance of our age makes us apt to think it was. And a learned man hath in a set discourse endeavoured to shew the great defects that there were in it; Neither can it, I think, be denied, but according to the reports we have now concerning it, some parts of their Learning

§. 2.

Comingius
de Hermet.
Medic. c.

10, 11, 12.

ing were frivolous, others obscure, a great deal *Magical*,

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and

and the rest *short* of that improvement, which the accession of the parts and industry of after ages gave unto it. But yet it is again as evident, that some parts of learning were *invented* by the *Egyptians*, o hers much improved, and that the *Greeks* did at first *set up* with the stock they borrowed out of *Egypt*, and that learning chiefly flourished there, when there was (I had almost said) an *Egyptian darkness* of Ignorance overspreading the face of *Greece* as well as other Nations.

§. 3.

Which will appear by these considerations, the great antiquity of their repute for Learning, the great advantages they had for promoting it, and the parts of Learning most in use among them. This, though it may seem a digression here, will yet tend to promote our design, by shewing thereby how qualified and accomplished *Moses* was to deliver to the world an history of ancient times. If we believe *Macrobius*, there was no people in the world could vie for Learning with the *Egyptians*, who makes *Egypt* in one place, the mother of all Arts, and in another, the *Egyptians omnium Philosophia disciplinarum parentes*, the Fathers of the Philosophick Sciences; he derives elsewhere the original of all Astronomy from them, *quos constat primos omnium cælum metiri, & scrutari anfos*: though it be more probable, that the Nativty even of Astronomy it self, was first calculated by the *Chaldeans*, from whom it was conveyed by the *Egyptians*. He likewise appropriates all divine knowledge to them, where he saith they were *Soliverum divinarum conscii*, and after calls

Satura l. 1.
cap. 14.
in *Soma*.
Scip. l. 1.
c. 19.

cap. 21.

Satura l. 1.
cap. 14.
l. 7. c. 13.

Egypt, divinarum omnium disciplinarum compotem. It is sufficiently notorious what great repute the *Egyptian Learning* hath been in, with some in our latter times, in that our *Chymists* look upon it as the greatest honour to their profession, that they think they can claim kindred of the old *Egyptian Learning*, and derive the pedigree of their *Chymistry* from the old *Egyptian Hermes*. But that vain pretence is sufficiently refuted by the fore-mentioned learned man *Conringius*, in his Tract on this subject, *de Hermetica Medicina*. *Franciscus Patricius* professeth himself so great an admirer of the old *Egyptian Learning*, that he thought it would be no bad exchange, if the *Peripatetick Philosophy*

were

were extruded, and the old Egyptian received instead of it. But the world is now grown wiser, then to receive his *Hermes Trismegistus* for the Author of the old Egyptian Philosophy, the credit of his Author being for ever blasted, and the doctrine contained in the books under his name, manifested to be a meer *Cento*, a confused mixture of the Christian, Platonick, and Egyptian doctrine together. So that he could hardly maintain the justness of the repute of the ancient Egyptian Learning from any thing now extant of it; but yet we see no reason to question it, especially since it is so honourably spoken of in *Sacred Writ*, and seems in it to have been made the *standard* and *measure* of humane wisdom. For which we have this observable testimony, that when the wisdom of Solomon is spoken of with the greatest advantage and commendation, it is set forth with this character, that it exceeded the wisdom of all the children of the East-Country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. Whence it is most natural and easie to argue, that certainly their learning must be accounted the greatest at that time in the world, or else it could not have been inferred, that Solomon was wiser then all men, because his wisdom excelled theirs, unless we suppose their wisdom to have been the greatest in that age of the world, when the wisdom of the *Gracians* (although in that time *Homer* is supposed to flourish) was not thought worthy the taking notice of. We see from hence then, as from irrefragable testimony, that the wisdom of the Egyptians antiently was no trivial Pedantry, nor meer superstitions and Magical rites, but that there was something in it solid and substantial, or it had not been worth triumphing over by the wisdom of Solomon: It being true of that, what *Lipsius* saith of the Roman Empire, *Quicquid dignum vinci videbatur, vicit, cetera non tam; non potuit quam contempnit*; it was an argument of some great worth, that it was over-top'd and conquered by it.

1 Kings 4.
29-30, 31.

De Magnit.
tud. Rom.
l. 1. c. 3.

Thus we see how just the repute of the ancient Egyptian Learning is from Testimony, and we shall find as great reason for it, when we consider the great advantages the Egyptians had for promoting of Learning among them. Two ways men come to knowledge, either by tradition from others,

§. 4.

or by observation of their own; what the *Egyptians* had the first way, will be spoken to afterwards; we now consider the latter of these. All knowledge arising from observation, must be either of those *Sciences* which immediately conduce to the benefit of mens lives, or such whose end is to improve mens rational faculties in the knowledge of things. The former necessity will put men upon the finding out: the latter require secessum & otia, freedom from other employments, a mind addicted to them, and industry in the study of them, and a care to preserve their inventions in them. The study of *Geometry* among the *Egyptians*, owed its original to necessity; for the river *Nile* being swelled with the showers falling in *Ethiopia*, and thence annually overflowing the Countrey of *Egypt*, and by its violence overturning all the marks they had to distinguish their lands, made it necessary for them upon every abatement of the flood to survey their lands, to find out every one his own by the quantity of the ground upon the survey. The necessity of which put them upon a more diligent enquiry into that study, that thereby they might attain to some exactness in that, which was to be of such necessary, constant and perpetual use: Thence we find the invention of *Geometry*, particularly attributed by *Herodotus*, *Diodorus*, *Strabo* and others, to the *Egyptians*. This skill of theirs they after improved into a greater benefit, viz. the conveying the water of *Nile* into those places where it had not overflown to so great a height, as to give them hopes of an ensuing plenty; which they did by the artificial cutting of several Channels for that end, wherein, saith *Strabo*, the *Egyptians* Art and Industry out-went Nature its self. By this likewise they observed the height and overflowing of the river, whereby they knew what harvest to expect the following year; which they did by a well near *Memphis* (from the use of it called *Νειλουμετρον*) upon the walls of which were the marks of several cubits, which they observe and publish it to all, that they might provide themselves accordingly. We see what grounds there are, even from profit and advantage, to make us believe that the *Egyptians* were skilled in *Geometry*, and the knowledge relating thereto.

Vid. Arist.
Metaph. 1.
l. 6. 1.

Herod. l. 2.
Diod. l. 1.
Strab. l. 17.
Cael. Rhod.
l. 18. c. 34.

And for the promoting of all other knowledge whose end is *Contemplation*, the very *confirmation* of their *Commonwealth* did much conduce thereto: For thereby it was proved that there should always be a sufficient number of persons freed from all other *employments*, who might devote themselves to a sedulous enquiry into the natures of things. Such were the *Egyptian Priests*, who by the peculiar nature of the *Egyptian Superstitions* were freed from that burdensome service of *sacrificing beasts*, which the Priests of other Nations were continually employed about, and so they enjoyed not only an *ease* but a very *honourable employment*; for they were the persons of the greatest honour, esteem, and authority among the *Egyptians*, of which rank, as far as I can find, all were accounted, who were not *Souldiers*, *Husbandmen*, or *Artificers*. For Strabo *Geog. l. 17* mentions no *Nobility* at all in *Egypt* distinct from the *Priests*; for he divides the whole *Commonwealth* into *Souldiers*, *Husbandmen*, and *Priests*. And telling us that the others were employed about matters of war, and the Kings revenues in peace, he adds, *ἐν τῷ ἱερὶ καὶ φιλοσοφίᾳ ἦσαν καὶ ἀγρονομία; ἐμπλατοὶ τε τοῦ βασιλεως ἦσαν*, The Priests minded the study of *Philosophy* and *Astronomy*; and conversed most with their Kings: And after, speaking of their Kings being studied in their arts as well as others of the *Priests*, he adds, *μετ' ὧν ἦν αὐτοῖς μέλιον ὁ βίος*, with whom they spent most of their lives. Agreeably to this *Plutarch* tells us, that *De Isid. et* the Kings themselves were often *Priests*; and adds out *Ostr.* of *Hecataeus*, that the Kings used to drink wine by measure, *ἰσθὺς ὄντες*, because they were *Priests*; for as he saith, the Kings of *Egypt* were always chosen either out of the rank of *Priests* or *Souldiers*, *τῷ μὲν δὲ αἰδοῖαν, τῷ δὲ δαΐμονας γένος ἀέθλου καὶ μὲν ἐκέρτερος*; those two orders being of the greatest honour, the one for valour, and the other for wisdom; and if the King were chosen out of the *Souldiers*, he was presently entred among the *Priests*, to learn their *mystical Sciences*. *Diodorus* indeed seems to reckon some great persons after the *Priests*, and distinct from the *Souldiery*; but if he means by these any other then some of the chief of the other two professions, I must say

Not. in Strab. l. 17. say as *Causabon* doth in another case of *Diodorus*, *Sanè Strabonis auctoritas multis Sienlis apud me praevalet*. *Diodorus* his testimony is not to be weighed with *Strabo's*. From hence we may understand the reason why that *Potipherah*, whole daughter *Joseph* married, is called *פִּתְוִיָּה*, which some render the Priest, others the Prince of On; but these two we see are very consistent, their Priests being their great Princes; and *Heliopolis*, or *On*, of which *Potipherah* was Prince or Priest, being the chief Seat and University of the Priests of Egypt. Now it is evident from *Clemens Alexandrinus*, that the Egyptians did not communicate their mysteries promiscuously to all, but only to such as were in succession to the Crown, or else to those of the Priests and their Children, who were most apt and fit for them, both by their dyes, instruction, and family. For this was unalterably observed among them, that there was a continued succession of a profession in their several families, both of Priests, Souldiers, and Husbandmen, whereby they kept their several orders without any mixture or confusion, which is confessed both by *Herodotus* and *Diodorus*: So that by this constitution Learning was among them confined to the Priests, which highly advanceth the probability of that tradition, preserved among the Egyptians concerning *Moses* (which likewise strongly proves our present design) viz.

Herod. l. 2. D'ed. l. 1. c. 71. *Manetho's* Records, as *Josephus* tells us, that *Moses* was one of the Priests at *Heliopolis*, and that his name among them was *Osarsiphus*, who changing his name, was called *Moses*, and in the time of *Amenophis* conducted the leprous people out of Egypt (so the Egyptians out of their hatred of the Israelites call them.) And *Charemon* another Egyptian Priest in the same Author, calls *Moses* a Scribe, and *Joseph* (by whom probably he means *Joshua*) a sacred Scribe, and saith, that the Egyptian name of *Moses* was *Tisephen*, and of *Joseph* *Peseleph*. Now this tradition did in all probability arise from the repute of *Moses* his learning and wisdom, which being among them proper to their Priests, they thence ascribed that name to him, although probably he might come to the knowledge of all their Mysteries, from the relation he had to *Pharaoh's* daughter.

We come now to consider the parts of the Egyptian learning, in which the Scripture tells us Moses was skil'd: This by Philo Judæus is branched in Arithmetick, Geometry, Musick, and Hieroglyphical Philosophy: But Sixtus Senensis more comprehensively from Diodorus, Diogenes Laërtis, and others, divides it into four parts, Mathematical, Natural, Divine, and Moral. Their skill in the Mathematical parts of learning hath been partly shewed already, and might be more largely from that skill in them, which the Grecians gained from the Egyptians, as both Iamblichus and Porphyrie speak of Pythagoras, that he gained his skill in Geometry chiefly from the Egyptians: For these, as Porphyrie saith, of a long time had been very studious of Geometry, as the Phœnicians of Arithmetick, and the Chaldeans of Astronomy. But Iamblichus (and I think deservedly) takes notice of the *μυστήρια*, the difficult access of the Egyptian Priests, especially as to acquaintance with their mysteries; and so Strabo calls them *μυσταὶ καὶ ἀποκρύφτοι*, such who concealed their learning under many symbols, and were not easily drawn to unfold it. And yet we might think the 22 years time which Pythagoras is thought to have spent among them, had been enough to have insinuated himself into their utmost acquaintance, and to have drawn from them the knowledge of their greatest mysteries; but yet we have no great reason to think he did, if we believe the story in Diogenes Laërtius of his sacrificing an Hecatomb for the finding out of that demonstration, which is now contained in the 47 proposition of the first of Euclide. Yet this did not abate the Grecians esteem of the Egyptians Mathematical Learning: for in Platon's time Endoxus Cnidius went into Egypt on purpose to acquire it there: and Democritus his boast, that none of the *Ἀρσεδοναπτα* in Egypt (so their Priests were called, as Clemens Alexandrinus and Eusebius tells us, whose relate the story) exceeded him in the Mathematicks, by which it may be at least inferred, that they were then in greatest esteem for them. Their great skill in Astronomy is attested by Diodorus, Strabo, Herodotus, and others, and by the finding out the course of the year by the motion of the

§. 6.

De vita

Mos.

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servedly) takes notice of the

μυστήρια, the difficult

access of the Egyptian Priests, especially as to acquaint-

ance with their mysteries; and so Strabo calls them

μυσταὶ καὶ ἀποκρύφτοι, such who concealed their learning under

many symbols, and were not easily drawn to unfold it. And

yet we might think the 22 years time which Pythagoras is

thought to have spent among them, had been enough to

have insinuated himself into their utmost acquaintance, and

to have drawn from them the knowledge of their greatest

mysteries; but yet we have no great reason to think he

did, if we believe the story in Diogenes Laërtius of his

sacrificing an Hecatomb for the finding out of that demon-

stration, which is now contained in the 47 proposition of

the first of Euclide. Yet this did not abate the Grecians

esteem of the Egyptians Mathematical Learning: for in

Platon's time Endoxus Cnidius went into Egypt on pur-

pose to acquire it there: and Democritus his boast, that

none of the Ἀρσεδοναπτα in Egypt (so their Priests were

called, as Clemens Alexandrinus and Eusebius tells us, whose

relate the story) exceeded him in the Mathematicks, by

which it may be at least inferred, that they were then in

greatest esteem for them. Their great skill in Astronomy is

attested by Diodorus, Strabo, Herodotus, and others, and

by the finding out the course of the year by the motion of

the

Herod. l. 2. the Sun, which was the invention of the Heliopolitan Priests. How much they valued Geography, appears from Clemens Strom. l. 6. his description of the ιερογραμματις, or sacred Scribe in the solemn procession; for he was required to be skilled in Hieroglyphicks, Cosmography, Geography, the motions of the Planets, the Choro-graphy of Egypt, and description of the Nile.

Par.

Eusebius in his notes on Dionysius, attributes the invention of Geographical Tables to Sesostris, who caused the Lands he had conquered to be described in Tables, and so communicated to the Egyptians, and from them to others. Their skill in natural Philosophy could not be very great, because of their Magick and Superstition, whereby they were hindered from all experiments in those natural things which they attributed a Divinity to; but they seem to have been more exact and curious in natural history; for, any prodigies, or any thing that was Anomalous in nature, they did, saith Strabo, φιλοπεφυμένως ἀναφύειν εἰς τὰ ἱερὰ ἡμέμην, with a great deal of curiosity insert it in their sacred records; and Herodotus adds, that more things of that nature are observed by them than by any other Nation; which, saith he, they not only diligently preserve, but frequently compare together, and from a similitude of prodigies gather a similitude of events. But that which gained the Egyptians the greatest repute abroad, seems to have been their early skill in Physick, which is so much spoken of by Homer, Plato, Herodotus, Plutarch, Diogenes Laertius, and others, that it were impertinent troubling a Readers patience with the proof of that which is so generally confessed. A great evidence of the antiquity of this study among them is (if Manetho may be so far credited) that Athothis the second King of the first Dynasty of the Thimites was a Physician himself, and wrote some books of Anatomy; and the second King of the third Dynasty of the Memphites, was for his skill in Physick honoured among them by the name of Esculapius. Pliny affirms it to have been the custom of their Kings

Natur. hist. to cause dead bodies to be dissected, to find out the nature of lib. 19. c. 5. diseases; and elsewhere tells us, that the original of Physick among them was from the relations of those who by any remedy were cured of any disease, which for a memorial

rial

rial to posterity were recorded in their *Temples*. Their *Hieroglyphical* and *mystical Learning* hath made the greatest noise in the world, and hath the least of *substance* in it; which whoever will not be convinced of without perusal of *Kirchers Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, will at last find it fully done to his hand by the successful endeavours of that otherwise learned man. I cannot think any rational man could think that study worth his pains, which at the highest can amount but to a conjecture; and when it is come to that with a great deal of pains, it is nothing but some ordinary and trivial observation. As in that famous *Hieroglyphick* of *Diospolis*, so much spoken of by the Ancients, where was a *Child* to express coming into the world, an *old man* for going out of it, an *Hawk* for God, an *Hippotamus* for hatred, and a *Crocodile* for impudence, and all to express this venerable *Apothegm*, *O ye that come into the world, and that go out of it, God hates impudence*. And therefore certainly this kind of *Learning* deserves the highest form among the *difficilis Nugae*, and all these *Hieroglyphicks* put together, will make but one good one, and that should be for *Labour lost*.

There is yet one *part* of *Learning* more among them, §. 7. which the *Egyptians* are esteemed for, which is the *Political* and *civil* part of it, which may better be called *wisdom* than most of the fore-going; two things speak much the *wisdom* of a Nation; good *Laws*, and a *prudent management* of them; their *Laws* are highly commended by *Strabo* and *Diodorus*; and it is none of the least commendations of them, that *Solon* and *Lycurgus* borrowed so many of their constitutions from them; and for the *prudent management* of their government, as the continuance of their *state* so long in peace and quietness, is an invincible demonstration of it; so the report given of them in *Scripture* adds a further testimony to it; for therein the King of *Egypt* is called the *Son of the wise*, as well as the *son of ancient Kings*: Isa. 19. and his counsellors are called *wise counsellors* of Pharaoh, and 11, 12. the *wise men*: whereby a more than ordinary prudence and policy must be understood. Can we now imagine such a person as *Moses* was, bred up in all the *ingenious literature* of

of Egypt, conversant among their wisest persons in Pharaohs Court, having thereby all advantages to improve himself, and to understand the utmost of all that they knew, should not be able to pass a judgement between a meer pretence and imposture, and real and important Truths? Can we think that one who had interest in so great a Court, all advantages of raising himself therein, should willingly forsake all the pleasures and delights at present, all his hopes and advantages for the future, were he not fully persuaded of the certain and undoubted truth of all those things which are recorded in his books? Is it possible a man of ordinary wisdom should venture himself upon so hazardous, unlikely, and dangerous employment, as that was Moses undertook, which could have no probability of success, but only upon the belief that that God who appeared unto him, was greater then all the Gods of Egypt, and could carry on his own design by his own power, insugre all the opposition which the Princes of the world could make against it? And what possible ground can we have to think that such a person who did verily believe the truth of what God revealed unto him, should dare to write any otherwise then as it was revealed unto him? If there had been any thing repugnant to common reason in the history of the Creation, the fall of man, the universal deluge, the propagation of the world by the sons of Noah, the history of the Patriarchs, had not Moses rational faculties as well as we? nay, had he them not far better improved then any of ours are? and was not he then able to judge what was suitable to reason, and what not? and can we think he would then deliver any thing inconsistent with reason or undoubted tradition then, when the Egyptian Priests might so readily and plainly have triumphed over him, by discovering the falshood of what he wrote? Thus we see that Moses was as highly qualified as any of the acutest Heathen Philosophers could be, for discerning truth from falshood; nay, in all probability he far excelled the most renowned of the Gracian Philosophers in that very kind of learning wherewith they made so great noise in the world, which was originally Egyptian, as is evident in the whole series of the Gracian Philosophers, who went after age

to Egypt to get some scraps of that learning there, which Moses could not have but full meals of, because of his high place, great interest, and power in Egypt. And must those hungry Philosophers then become the only Masters of our reason, and their dictates be received as the sense and voice of nature, which they either received from uncertain tradition, or else delivered in opposition to it, that they might be more taken notice of in the world? Must an *idols* *ign* be confronted with *Thus saith the Lord*? and a few pitiful symbols vye authority with divine commands? and *Ex nihilo nihil fit* be sooner believed, than *In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth*? What irrefragable evidence of reason is that so confident a presumption built upon, when it can signify nothing without this hypothesis, that there is nothing but matter in the world? and let this first be proved, and we will never stick to grant the other. I may confidently say the great gullery of the world hath been, taking philosophical dictates for the standard of reason, and unproved hypotheses for certain foundations for our discourse to rely upon. And the seeking to reconcile the mysteries of our faith to these, hath been that which hath almost destroyed it, and turned our Religion into a meer philosophical speculation. But of this elsewhere. We see then that insisting merely on the accomplishments and rational perfections of the persons who speak, we have more reason to yield credit to Moses in his history, than to any Philosophers in their speculations.

And that which in the next place speaks Moses to be a person of wisdom, and judgement, and ability to find out truth, was his age and experience when he delivered these things to the world. He vented no crude and indigested conceptions, no sudden and temerarious fancies, the usual issues of seeming and juvenile wits; he lived long enough to have experience to try, and judgement to distinguish a meer outside and varnish, from what was solid and substantial. We cannot then have the least ground of suspicion, that Moses was any wayes unfit to discern truth from falsehood, and therefore was capable of judging the one from the other.

§. 8.

But though persons be never so highly accomplished for *parts, learning, and experience*, yet if they want *due information* of the certainty of the things they deliver, they may be still *deceiving themselves*; and if they preserve it for posterity, be guilty of *deceiving others*. Let us now therefore see whether *Moses* had not as great *advantages* for understanding the truth of his *History*, as he had *judgement* to discern it. And concerning all those things contained in the *four last books* of his, to his own death, it was *impossible* any should have greater than himself, writing nothing but what he was *pars magna* himself, of what he *saw, and heard, and did*; and can any testimony be desired greater than his whose actions they were; or who was present at the doing of them, and that not in any *private way*, but in the most *publick capacity*? For although private persons may be present at great actions, yet they may be guilty of misrepresenting them, for want of understanding all circumstances *precedent, and subsequent*, or for want of understanding the *designs* of the chief *instruments* of action; but when the *person* himself, who was the *chief* in all, shall undertake to write an exact *History* of it, what evidence can be desired more certain than that is, that there could be no defect as to *information* concerning what was done? The only *scruple* then that can be made, must be concerning the *passages* of former times which *Moses* relates. And here I doubt not but to make it appear, that insisting only on all that can be desired in a *bare Historian* (setting aside *Divine revelation*) he had as *true and certain information* of the *History* of those former ages, as any one can have of things at that distance from themselves; and that is by a *certain uninterrupted tradition* of them, which will appear more clear and evident in that Nation of which *Moses* was, than in any other Nation in the world: And that on these *two accounts*: first, the *undoubted lineal descent from Father to Son* in the *Jewish Nation*. Secondly, *Their interest lying so much in the preserving this tradition entire*.

§. 9.

First, That there was a *certain unmixed lineal descent from Father to Son* in the *Jewish Nation*: the great cause of most of the *confusion* in the *tradition* of other Nations, was the frequent

frequent mixing of several families one with another; now that God might as it were on purpose satisfy the world of the Israelites capacity to preserve the tradition entire, he prohibited their mixture by marriages with the people of other Nations and families. So that in *Moses* his time it was a very easie matter to run up their lineal descent as far as the flood, nay up to *Adam*; for *Adam* conversed sometime with *Noah*; *Sem* his Son was probably living in some part of *Jacob*'s time, or *Isaac*'s at least; and how easily and uninterruptedly might the general tradition of the ancient History be continued thence to the time of *Moses*, when the number of families agreeing in this tradition was increased, and withall incorporated by a common ligament of Religion? I demand then, where can we suppose any ignorance or cutting off this general tradition in so continued a succession as here was? Can we imagine that the Grandchildren of *Jacob* could be ignorant of their own pedigree, and whence they came into *Egypt*? can we think a thing so late and so remarkable as the account of their coming thither, should be forgotten, which was attended with so many memorable circumstances, especially the selling and advancement of *Joseph*, whose memory it was impossible should be obliterated in so short a time? Could *Jacob* be ignorant of the Country whence his Grand-father *Abraham* came? especially when he lived so long in it himself, and married into that branch of the family that was remaining there, when he had served his Uncle *Laban*? Could *Abraham*, when he was cotemporary with *Sem*, be ignorant of the truth of the flood, when *Sem* from whom he derived himself, was one of the persons who escaped it in the *Ark*? Could *Sem* be ignorant of the actions before the flood, when *Adam* the first man, lived some part of his time with *Noah*? and could *Noah* then be ignorant of the Creation, and the fall of man? Thus we see it almost impossible, that any age among them then could be ignorant of the passages of the precedent, which they were so few Generations removed from, that they could with ease derive themselves from the first man. What then can we say? that any of these had a design of deceiving their posterity, and so corrupted the tradition?

dition? but besides, that it could be hardly possible at that time, when there were so many remaining testimonies of former times; what end can we imagine that any Parents should have in thus deceiving their Children, or what advantage should come to them by such a deceit? Nay, I shall now manifest in the second place, that the whole interest of their children lay in preserving this tradition certain and entire. For their hopes of possessing Canaan and title to it, depended upon the promise made to Abraham 400 years before; which would not only keep awake their sense of Divine Providence, but would make them careful during their bondage to preserve their Genealogies, because all the right they could plead to their possessions in Canaan, was from their being of Abrahams seed. And besides this, on purpose to be a memorial to them of passages between God and Abraham, they had in their flesh a badge of circumcision, which would serve to call to mind those transactions which had been between God and their fore fathers. These things then do fully demonstrate, that inslitting only on rational evidence, the Israelites were the most certain conservators of the ancient History of the world; and can we then think, that Moses who was the Ruler among them, should not fully understand those things which every Israelite could scarce be ignorant of, and might correct the mistakes of Moses in his History, if he had been guilty of any such? These things I suppose have made the first proposition evident, that it was morally impossible Moses should be deceived himself, or be ignorant of the things which he reports to others, both because he had abilities sufficient to discover truth from falsehood, and sufficient information of the passages of former times.

CHAP. III.

Moses his fidelity and integrity proved.

Moses considered as an Historian, and as a Law-giver; his fidelity in both proved: clear evidences that he had no intent to deceive in his History, freedom from private interest, impartiality in his relations, plainness and perspicuity of style. As a Law-giver, he came armed with Divine authority, which being the main thing, is fixed on to be fully proved from his actions and writings. The power of miracles the great evidence of Divine revelation. Two grand questions propounded. In what case miracles may be expected, and how known to be true. No necessity of a constant power of miracles in a Church: Two Cases alone wherein they may be expected. When any thing comes as a Law from God, and when a Divine Law is to be repealed. The necessity of miracles in those cases as an evidence of Divine revelation asserted. Objections answered. No use of miracles when the doctrine is settled and owned by miracles in the first revelation. No need of miracles in reformation of a Church.

THE second proposition contains the proof of *Moses* his fidelity, that he was as far from having any intent to deceive others, as he was being deceived himself. Two ways *Moses* must be considered, as an *Historian*, and as a *Law-giver*; the only inducement for him to deceive as an *Historian*, must be some particular interest which must draw him aside from an impartial delivery of the truth; as a *Law-giver* he might deceive, if he pretended Divine revelation for those *Laws* which were only the issues of his own brain, that they might be received with a greater veneration among the people; as *Numa Pompilius* and others did. Now if we prove that *Moses* had no interest to deceive in his History, and had all rational evidence of Divine revelation in his *Laws*, we shall abundantly evince the undoubted fidelity

§. I.

fidelity of *Moses* in every thing recorded by him. We begin then with his *fidelity* as an *Historian*; and it being contrary to the *common interest* of the world to *deceive* and *be deceived*, we have no reason to entertain any suspicions of the *veracity* of any person where we cannot discern some *peculiar interest* that might have a stronger *bias* upon him than the *common interest* of the world. For it is otherwise in *morals* than in *naturals*; for in *naturals*, we see that every thing will leave its *proper interest* to preserve the *common interest* of *nature*; but in *morals*, there is nothing more common than *deserting* the *common interest* of mankind, to set up a *peculiar interest* against it: It being the truest description of a *Politician*, that he is one who makes himself the *centre*, and the *whole world* his *circumference*; that he regards not how much the *whole world* is abused, if any advantage doth accrue to himself by it. Where we see it then the design of any person to *advance himself* or his posterity, or to set up the *credit* of the *Nation* whose *History* he writes, we may have just cause to suspect his *partiality*, because we then find a sufficient inducement for such a one to leave the *common road* of truth, and to fall into the *paths* of deceit. But we have not the least ground to suspect any such *partiality* in the *History* of *Moses*; for nothing is more clear than that he was free from the *ambitious design* of *advancing himself* and his posterity, who notwithstanding the great *honour* he enjoyed himself, was content to leave his posterity in the meanest sort of *attendance* upon the *Tabernacle*. And as little have we ground to think he intended to *flatter* that *Nation*, which he so lively describes, that one would think he had rather an interest to set forth the *frowardness*, *unbelief*, *unthankfulness*, and *disobedience* of a *Nation* towards a *Gracious God*, then any wayes to *inhanche* their reputation in the world, or to ingratiate himself with them by writing this *History* of them. Nay, and he sets forth so exactly the *lesser failings* and *grosser enormities* of all the *Ancestors* of this *Nation* whose acts he records, that any impartial reader will soon acquit him of a design of *flattery*, when after he hath recorded those *faults*; he seeks not to *extenuate* them, or bring any *excuse* or pretence to *palliate* them. So that any

any observing reader may easily take notice, that he was carried on by a higher design than the common people of Historians are, and that his drift and scope was to exalt the goodness and favour of God, towards a rebellious and obstinate people. Of which there can be no greater nor more lively demonstration, than the History of all the transactions of the Jewish Nation, from their coming forth of Egypt to their utter ruin and desolation. And Moses tells them as from God himself, it was neither for their number, nor their goodness, that God set his Love upon them, but he loved them, because he loved them; i. e. no other account was to be given of his gracious dealing with them, but the freeness of his own bounty, and the exuberancy of his goodness towards them. Nay, have we not cause to admire the ingenuity as well as veracity of this excellent personage, who not only layes so notorious a blot upon the stock of his own family Levi, recording so punctually the inhumanity and cruelty of him and Simeon in their dealings with the Shechemites; but likewise inserts that curse which was left upon their memory for it by their own Father at his decease. And that he might not leave the least suspicion of partiality behind him, he hath not done as the statuary did, (who engraved his own name so artificially in the statue of Jupiter, that one should continue as long as the other,) but what the other intended for the praise of his skill, Moses hath done for his ingenuity, that he hath so interwoven the History of his own failings and disobedience with those of the Nation, that his spots are like to continue as long as the whole web of his History is like to do. Had it been the least part of his design to have his memory preserved with a superstitious veneration among the Jews, how easie had it been for him to have left out any thing that might in the least entrench upon his reputation? but we find him very secure and careless in that particular; nay, on the other side, very studious and industrious in depressing the honour and deserts of men, and advancing the power and goodness of God. And all this he doth, not in an affected strain of Rhetorick, whose proper work is *impetrare fidem mendacio*, and as Tully somewhere confesseth, to make things seem otherwise than they are, but

Deut. 7. 7.
8.Gen. 34.
25.
Gen. 49. 5.
6. 7

with that *innate simplicity* and *plainness*, and yet withal with that *Imperatoria brevisitas*, that *Majesty* and *authority*, that it is thereby evident he sought not to *court acceptance*, but to *demand belief* : Nor had any such pitiſul deſign of pleaſing his Readers with ſome *affected phrases*, but thought that *Truth* it ſelf had *preſence enough* with it, to *command the ſubmiſſion* of our *underſtandings* to it.

§. 2.

Eſpecially when all theſe were delivered by ſuch a one who came ſufficiently armed with all *motives of credibility* and *inducements to aſſent*, by that *evidence* which he gave, that he was no *pretender to divine revelation*, but was really employed as a *peculiar inſtrument of State* under the *God and Ruler of the whole world*. Which if it be made clear, then all our further doubts muſt preſently ceaſe, and all impertinent diſputes be ſilenced, when the ſupream *Majeſty* appears *impowring* any perſon to *diſtate* to the world the *Laws* they muſt be governed by. For if any thing be repugnant to our *rational faculties*, that is, that *God* ſhould *diſtate* any thing but what is moſt certainly true, or that the *Governor of the world* ſhould *preſcribe* any *Laws*, but ſuch as were moſt *juſt* and *reaſonable*. If we ſuppoſe a *God*, we cannot queſtion *veracity* to be one of his chiefeſt *Attributes*, and that it is *impoſſible* the *God of truth* ſhould employ any, to *reveal* any thing as from him, but what was *undoubtedly true*. So that it were an argument of the moſt groſs and *unreaſonable incredulity*, to *distrust* the *certainity* of any thing which comes to us with ſufficient *evidence of Divine revelation*; becauſe thereby we ſhew our *distrust* of the *veracity* of *God himſelf*. All that we can deſire then, is only *reaſonable ſatisfaction* concerning the *evidence of Divine revelation* in the perſon whoſe words we are to credit, and this our *Gracious God* hath been ſo far from denying men, that he hath given all *rational evidence* of the truth of it. For it implying no *incongruity* at all, to any *notions of God or ourſelves*, that *God* ſhould, when it pleaſes him, ſingle out ſome *inſtrument* to manifeſt his will to the world; our enquiry then leads us to thoſe things which may be proper *notes and characters* of ſuch a perſon who is employed on ſo high an *Embassy*. And thoſe are chiefly theſe two; If his actions be ſuch

such as could not flow from the power of meer natural causes; and if the things he reveals be such as could not proceed from any created understanding. First, then, for his actions, these striking most upon our outward senses when they are any thing extraordinary, do transmit along with the impressions of them to the understanding, an high opinion of the person that does them: Whereas the meer brights of knowledge, or profoundness of things discovered, can have no such present power and influence upon any, but such as are of more raised and inquisitive minds. And the world is generally more apt to suspect its self deceived with words, then it can be with actions; and hence Miracles, or the doing of things above the reach of nature, hath been alwayes embraced as the greatest testimony of Divine authority and revelation. For which there is this evident reason, that the course of nature being settled by divine power, and every thing acting there by the force of that power it received at first, it seems impossible that any thing should really alter the series of things, without the same power which at first produced them. This then we take for granted, that where ever such a power appears, there is a certain evidence of a Divine presence going along with such a person who enjoys it. And this is that which is most evident in the actions of Moses, both as to the Miracles he wrought, both in Egypt and the Wilderness; and his miraculous deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt, this latter being as much above the reach of any merely civil power, as the other above natural.

We therefore come to the rational evidence of that divine authority whereby Moses acted, which may be gathered from that divine power which appeared in his actions; which being a matter of so great weight and importance (it being one of the main bases whereon the evidence of divine revelation, as to us, doth stand) and withal of so great difficulty and obscurity, (caused through the preferring some parties in Religion, above the common interest of it) it will require more care and diligence to search what influence the power of miracles hath upon the proving the Divine Commission of those who do them. Whether they are such undoubted credentials, that whereever they are produced, we are presently

sently to receive the persons who bring them, as extraordinary *Embassadors* from heaven, imployed on some peculiar message to the sons of men? For the full stating of this important question, two things must be cleared: First, In what cases miracles may be expected as credentials to confirm an immediate commission from heaven? Secondly, What rational evidences do attend these miracles, to assure us they are such as they pretend to be?

- I. First, For the cases wherein these miracles are to be expected as inducements to, or confirmations of our faith, concerning the Divine employment of any persons in the world. And here I lay down this as a certain foundation, that a power of miracles is not constantly and perpetually necessary in all those who manage the affairs of Heaven here on earth, or that all in the name of God in the world. When the doctrine of faith is once settled in sacred records, and the divine revelation of that doctrine sufficiently attested, by a power of miracles in the revealers of it, What imaginable necessity or pretext can there be for a contrived power of miracles, especially among such as already own the Divine revelation of the Scriptures? To make then a power of working miracles to be constantly resident in the Church of God, as one of the necessary notes and characters of it, is to put God upon that necessity which common nature is freed from, viz. of multiplying things without sufficient cause to be given for them, and to leave mens faith at a stand, when God hath given sufficient testimony for it to rely upon. It is a thing too common and easie to be observed, that some persons out of their eagerness to uphold the interest of their own party, have been fain to establish it upon such grounds, which when they are sufficiently searched to the bottom, do apparently undermine the common and sure foundations whereon the belief of our common Christianity doth mainly stand. It were easie to make a large discourse on this subject, whereby we may rip open the wounds that Christianity hath received, through the contentions of the several parties of it; but this imputation cannot with so much reason be fastened on any party, as that which is nailed to a pretended inflexible chair; for which we need no other instance, then this before

before us. For while the leaders of that party make a power of miracles to be a necessary note of the true Church, they unavoidably run men upon this dangerous precipice, not to believe any thing as a matter of faith, where they find not sufficient miracles to convince them that is the true Church which propounds it to them. Which necessarily follows from their acknowledged principles; for it being impossible according to them, to believe any thing with a divine faith, and it being impossible to know which is this infallible guide, but by the notes and characters of it, and one of those notes being a power of miracles, I cannot find out my guide but by this power; and this power must be present in the Church, (for nothing of former ages concerning faith, as the Miracles of Christ, his resurrection, &c. is to be believed, but on the Churches account) and therefore where men do not find sufficient conviction from present miracles, to believe the Church to be an infallible guide, they must throw off all faith concerning the Gospel: for as good never a whit, as never the better. And therefore it is no wonder Atheism should be so thriving a plant in Italy, nay under, if not within the walls of Rome it self, where inquisitive persons do daily see the jugglings and impostures of Priests in their pretended miracles, and from thence are brought to look upon Religion its self as a meer imposture, and to think no Pope so infallible as he that said, *Quantum nobis profuit hæc de Christo fabula?* Such horrid consequences do men drive others, if not bring themselves to, when they imploy their parts and industry rather to uphold a corrupt interest, then to promote the belief of the acknowledged principles of Christian faith. But as long as we assert no necessity of such a power of miracles to be the note of any true Church, nor any such necessity of an infallible guide, but that the miracles wrought by Christ and his Apostles, were sufficient evidences of a divine spirit in them; and that the Scriptures were recorded by them to be an infallible rule of faith, here we have more clear reason as to the primary motives and grounds of faith, and withall the infallible veracity of God in the Scriptures, as the last resolution of faith. And while we assert

assert such an *infallible rule* of faith, delivered to us by such an unanimous consent from the first delivery of it, and then so fully attested by such *uncontroulable miracles*, we cannot in the least understand to what end a power of miracles should now serve in the Church, especially among those who all believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God. Indeed before the great harvest of Converts in the primitive times were brought in, both of Jews and Gentiles, and the Church fully settled in receiving the Canon of the Scriptures universally, we find God did continue this power among them; but after the books of the New Testament were generally imbraced as the rule of faith among Christians, we find them so far from pretending to any such power, that they reject the pretenders to it, such as the Donatists were, and plead upon the same accounts as we do now against the necessity of it. We see then no reason in the world for miracles to be continued where the doctrine of faith is settled, as being confirmed by miracles in the first preachers of it.

§. 4.

There are only these two cases then, wherein miracles may justly and with reason be expected. First, *when any person comes as by an extraordinary commission from God to the world, either to deliver some peculiar message, or to do some more than ordinary service.* Secondly, *when something that hath been before established by Divine Law, is to be repeated, and some other way of worship established instead of it.* First, *When any comes upon an extraordinary message to the world, in the name of, and by commission from God,* then it is but reason to require some more than ordinary evidence of such authority. Because of the main importance of the duty of giving credit to such a person, and the great sin of being guilty of rejecting that divine authority which appears in him. And in this case we cannot think that God would require it as a duty to believe, where he doth not give sufficient arguments for faith, nor that he will punish persons for such a fault, which an invincible ignorance was the cause of. Indeed God doth not use to necessitate faith, as to the act of it, but he doth so clearly propound the object of it, with all arguments inducing to it, as may sufficiently justify a Believers choice in point of reason and prudence, and may leave all

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unbelievers without excuse. I cannot see what account a man can give to himself of his faith, much less what *Apology* he can make to others for it, unless he be sufficiently convinced, in point of the *highest reason*, that it was his *duty to believe*; and in order to that *conviction*, there must be some clear *evidence* given, that what is spoken hath the *impress of Divine Authority* upon it. Now what convictions there can be to any sober mind concerning *Divine authority* in any person without such a *power of miracles* going along with him, when he is to deliver some *new Doctrine* to the world to be believed, I confess I cannot understand. For although I doubt not but where ever *God doth reveal* any thing to any person immediately, he gives *demonstrable evidence* to the inward *senses* of the *soul*, that it comes from himself, yet this *inward sense* can be no ground to another person to believe his *doctrine divine*, because no man can be a *competent judge* of the *actings* of another's *senses*; and it is impossible to another person to distinguish the *actings* of the *divine Spirit* from strong *impressions* of *fancy* by the *force* and *energy* of them. If it be said, that we are bound to believe *Object.* those, who say they are fully satisfied of their *Divine Commission*, I answer, *First*, this will expose us to all *delusions* imaginable; for if we are bound to believe them because they say so, we are bound to believe all which say so; and none are more confident pretenders to this than the greatest deceivers, as the experience of our age will sufficiently witness. *Secondly*, Men must necessarily be bound to believe *contradictions*; for nothing more ordinary, than for such confident pretend-
ers to a *Divine Spirit*, to *contradict* one another, and it may be, the same person in a little time *contradict himself*: and must we still be bound to believe all they say? If so, no *Philosophers* would be so much in request, as those *Aristotle* disputes against in his *Metaphysics*, who thought a thing might be, and not be, at the same time. *Thirdly*, The ground of faith at last will be but a meer *humane testimony*, as far as the person who is to believe is capable of judging of it. For the *Question* being, Whether the person I am to believe hath *divine authority* for what he saith, What ground can I have to believe that he hath so? Must I take his bare affirmation for

Object.

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for it ? If so, then a meer humane testimony must be the ground of *divine faith*, and that which it is last resolved into ; if it be said that I am to believe the *divine authority* by which he speaks, when he speaks in the name of God : answer, the question will again return, how I shall know he speaks this from *divine authority* ? and so there must be a progress in *infinium*, or founding *divine faith* on a meer humane testimony, if I am to believe *divine revelation* merely on the account of the persons affirmation who pretends unto it. For in this case it holds good, *non apparentis & non existentis eadem est ratio*, if he be divinely inspired, and there be no ground inducing me to believe that he is so, I shall be excused, if I believe him not, if my willfulness and laziness be not the cause of my unbelief.

- §. 5. If it be said that God will satisfy the minds of good men concerning the truth of *divine revelation*. I grant it to be wonderfully true; but all the question is *de modo*, how God will satisfy them ? whether merely by inspiration of his own spirit in them, assuring them that it is God that speaks in such persons ; or by giving them *rational evidence*, convincing them of sufficient grounds to believe it. If we assert the former way, we run into these inconveniences ; First, we make as immediate a revelation in all those who believe, as in those who are to reveal *divine truths* to us ; for there is a new revelation of an object immediately to the mind, viz. that such a person is inspired of God ; and so is not after the common way of the Spirits illumination in Believers, which is by enlightning the faculty, without the proposition of any new object, as it is in the work of Grace : So that according to this opinion, there must be immediate inspiration as to that act of faith, whereby we believe any one to have been divinely inspired, and consequently to that whereby we believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God. Secondly, Doth not this make the fairest plea for mens unbelief ? For I demand, Is it the duty of those who want that immediate illumination, to believe or no ? If it be not their duty, unbelief can be no sin to them ; if it be a duty, it must be made known to be a duty, and how can that be made known to them to be a duty, when they want the only and necessary means of instruction

instruction in order to it? Will God condemn them for that, which it was impossible they should have, unless God gave it them? And how can they be left *inexcusable*, who want to much as *rational inducements* to faith? for of these I now speak, and not of *efficacious persuasions* of the mind, when there are *rational arguments* for faith propounded. But lastly, I suppose the case will be cleared, when we take notice what course God hath alwayes taken to give all *rational satisfaction* to the minds of men, concerning the persons whom he hath employed in either of the fore mentioned cases. First, for those who have been employed upon some special message and service for God, he hath sent them forth sufficiently provided with manifestations of the Divine power whereby they acted: As is most clear and evident in the present case of Moses, Exodus 4. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. where Moses puts the case to God which we are now debating of. Supposing, saith he, that I should go to the Israelites and tell them, God had appeared to me, and sent me to deliver them, and they should say God had not appeared unto me, how should I satisfy them? God doth not reject this objection of Moses as favouring of unbelief, but presently shews him how he should satisfy them, by causing a miracle before his face, turning his rod into a Serpent; and God gives this as the reason of it, vers. 5. *That they may believe that the Lord God of their Fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob hath appeared unto thee.* It seems God himself thought this would be the most pregnant evidence of Gods appearing to him, if he wrought miracles before their faces. Nay, lest they should think one single miracle was not sufficient, God in the immediate following verses adjoyns two more, which he should do in order to their satisfaction; and further, vers. 21. God gave him a charge to do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which he had put into his hand. And accordingly we find Pharaoh presently demanding a miracle of Moses, Exodus 7. 9. which accordingly Moses did in his presence, though he might suppose Pharaohs demand not to proceed from desire of satisfaction, but from some hopes that for want of it, he might have rendred his credit suspected among the Israelites.

§. 6.

Deut. 13.
1, 2, 3.

Indeed after God had delivered his people, and had settled them in a way of serving him according to the *Laws* delivered by *Moses*, which he had confirmed by unquestionable *miracles* among them, we find a *caution* laid in by *Moses* himself, against those which should pretend signs and wonders to draw them off from the Religion established by the *Law of Moses*. And so likewise under the *Gospel*, after that was established by the *unparallel'd miracles* of our *Saviour* and his *Apostles*, we find frequent *cautions* against being deceived by those who came with pretences of doing great *miracles*. But this is so far from infringing the *credibility* of such a *Testimony* which is confirmed by *miracles*, that it yields a strong confirmation to the truth of what I now assert. For the *doctrine* is supposed to be already *established* by *miracles*, according to which we are to judge of the *spirits* of such *pretenders*. Now it stands to the greatest reason, that when a *Religion* is once *established* by uncon-
trouled *miracles*, we should not hearken to every whiffing *Conjuror* that will pretend to do great feats, to draw us off from the truth established. In which case, the surest way to discover the *imposture*, is to compare his pretended *miracles* with those *true* and *real* ones which were done by *Moses* and *Christ*; and the ground of it is, because every person is no competent *judge* of the truth of a *miracle*; for the *Devil* by his power and subtilty, may easily deceive all such as will be led by the nose by him, in expectation of some wonders to be done by him. And therefore as long as we have no ground to question the *certainity* of those *miracles* which were wrought by *Christ* or *Moses*, I am bound to adhere to the *doctrine* established by those *miracles*, and to make them my rule of judging all persons who shall pretend to work *miracles*: Because, 1. I do not know how far God may give men over to be deceived by *lying wonders*, who will not receive the truth in the love of it; i. e. those that think not the *Christian Religion* sufficiently confirmed by the *miracles* wrought at the first *promulgation* of it, God in justice may permit the *Devil* to go further then otherwise he could, and leave such persons to their own credulity, to believe every *imposture* and *illusion* of their senses for

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true miracles. 2. That doctrine which was confirmed by undoubted miracles hath assured us of the coming of *lying wonders*, whereby many should be deceived. Now this part of the doctrine of the Gospel is as certainly true as any of the rest; for it was confirmed by the same miracles that the other was; and besides that, the very coming of such miracles is an evidence of the truth of it, it falling out so exactly according to what was foretold so many hundred years since. Now if this doctrine be true, then am I certain the intent of these miracles is to deceive, and that those are deceived who hearken to them; and what reason then have I to believe them? 3. To what end do these miracles serve? Are they to confirm the truths contained in Scripture? But what need they any confirmation now, when we are assured by the miracles wrought by Christ and his Apostles, that the doctrine by them preached came from God? and so hath been received upon the credit of those miracles ever since. Were these truths sufficiently proved to be from God before or no? If not, then all former ages have believed without sufficient ground for faith; if they were, then what ground can there be to confirm us in them now? certainly God, who never doth any thing but for very great purposes, will never alter the course of nature, merely for satisfaction of mens vain curiosities.

But it may be it will be said, *It was something not fully revealed in Scripture which is thus confirmed by miracles*: but where hath the Scripture told us, that any thing not fully revealed there, should be afterwards confirmed? Was the Scripture an infallible rule of faith while this was wanting in it? Did Christ and his Apostles discharge their places, when they left something unrevealed to us? Was this a duty before these miracles, or no? if it was, what need miracles to confirm it? if not, Christ hath not told us all necessary conditions of salvation. For whatever is required as a duty, is such as the neglect of it runs men upon damnation. Lastly, mens faith will be left at continual uncertainties; for we know not according to this principle, when we have all that is necessary to be believed, or do all that is necessary to be practised in order to salvation. For if God may still

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§. 7.

make new articles of faith, or constitute new duties by fresh miracles, I must go and enquire what miracles are wrought in every place, to see that I miss nothing that may be necessary for me, in order to my happiness in another world.

If men pretend to deliver any doctrine contrary to the Scripture: then it is not only necessary that they confirm it by miracles, but they must manifest the falsity of those miracles on which that doctrine is believed, or else they must use another miracle to prove that God will set his seal to confirm both parts of a contradiction to be true. Which being the hardest task of all, had need be proved by very sufficient and undoubted miracles, such as may be able to make us believe those are miracles, and are not, at the same time, and so the strength of the argument is utterly destroyed by the medium produced to prove it by.

By this discourse these two things are clear: First, that no pretences of miracles are to be hearkened to, when the doctrine we are to believe is already established by them, if those miracles tend in the least to the derogation of the truth of what was established by those former miracles. Secondly, that when the full doctrine we are to believe is established by miracles, there is no necessary at all of new miracles, for confirmation of any of the truths therein delivered. And therefore it is a most unreasonable thing to demand miracles of those to prove the truth of the doctrine they deliver, who do first solemnly profess to deliver nothing but what was confirmed by miracles in the first delivery of it, and is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; and secondly do not pretend to any immediate Commission from heaven, but do nothing but what in their consciences they think every true Christian is bound to do; much more all Magistrates and Ministers who believe the truth of what they profess, which is in their places to reform all errors and abuses which are crept into the doctrine or practice of Christianity, through the corruption of men or times. And therefore it is a most unjust and unreasonable demand of the Papists, when they require miracles from our first reformers, to prove the truth of their doctrine with. Had they pretended to have come with an

immediate

immediate commission from heaven to have added to the Doctrine of the Gospel, there had been some plea for such a demand; but it was quite otherwise with them; Their only design was to whip the buyers and sellers out of the Temple, to purge the Church from its abuses: And although that by Jerome was thought to be one of our Saviours greatest miracles, yet this by us is conceived to be no other then the duty of all Magistrates, Ministers, and private Christians; these by their prayers, Ministers, by their doctrine, and Magistrates by their just authority.

CHAP. IV.

The fidelity of the Prophets succeeding Moses.

An order of Prophets to succeed Moses, by Gods own appointment in the Law of Moses. The Schools of the Prophets, the original and institution of them. The Cities of the Levites. The occasion of their first institution. The places of the Schools of the Prophets, and the tendency of the institution there to a Prophetical office. Of the Musick used in the Schools of the Prophets. The Roman Assamenta, and the Greek Hymns in their solemn Worship. The two sorts of Prophets among the Jews, Leiger and extraordinary. Ordinary Prophets taken out of the Schools, proved by Amos and Saul.

BUT although now under the Gospel (the revelation of Gods will being compleated by Christ and his Apostles) we have no reason either to expect new Revelations, or new miracles for confirming the old; yet under the Law, God training up his people by degrees till the coming of Christ, there was a necessity of a new supply of Divine Messengers (called Prophets) to prepare the people, and make way for the coming of Christ: As to whom these two things are considerable.

First, Those Prophets whose work was to inform the people of their duties, or to reprove them for their sins, or to prepare them

them for the coming of the *Messias* (which were their chief tasks) had no need to confirm the truth of their doctrine or commission from heaven by the working of miracles among them. And that on these two accounts.

First, *Because God did not consummate the revelation of his mind and will to the Jews by the Ministry of Moses, but appointed a succession of Prophets to be among them, to make known his mind unto them.* Now in this case, when the *Prophetical* office was established among them, what necessity was there that every one that came to them upon an errand from God, should prove his *Testimony* to be true by miracles, when in the discharge of his office he delivered nothing dissonant from the *Law* of Moses? It is one argument God intended a *succession of Prophets*, when he laid down such rules in his *Law* for the judging of them, and to know whether they were truly inspired or no, *Deut. 15. 21, 22:* And in that same place God doth promise a *succession of Prophets*, *Deut. 18. 15, 18. A Prophet will the Lord God raise up unto thee like unto me; to him shall ye hearken.* Which words, though in their full and compleat sense they do relate to *Christ* (who is the great *Prophet* of the *Church*) yet whoever attends to the full scope of the words, will easily perceive that the immediate sense of them doth relate to an order of *Prophets* which should succeed *Moses* among the *Jews*; between whom and *Moses* there would be a great similitude as to their *Birth*, *Calling*, and *Doctrine*, though not a just equality, which is excluded, *Deut. 34. 10, 11.* and the chief reason why it is said there that the other *Prophets* fell so much short of *Moses*, is, in regard of the signs and wonders which he wrought, as is there largely expressed. Nor may it seem strange, that by a *Prophet* should be understood an order or *succession of Prophets*, when it is acknowledged by most *Protestants*, that by ὁ Ἀντίχριστος, the *Antichrist*, is understood a rank and *succession* of several persons in the same name and function: And that it is to be understood in those words concerning a *succession of Prophets*, will appear by the occasion of their being brought in; for verse 14. *God prohibits* them to hearken after the manner of their neighbour-nations, to observers of times and Divi-

vers, and then brings in the following words, v. 15. as to the reason of that prohibition, that God would raise up a Prophet among themselves like unto Moses, and to him should *V. Arabic.* they hearken. Now let any rational man judge whether *vers. et* it were so probable an argument to keep them from hear- *Calv. in loc.* kening to Diviners of other Nations, that there should a *P. Fagiam,* Prophet arise 2000 years after like unto Moses, as that he *P. Martyr.* would raise up a continued succession of Prophets among *Loc. Com.* themselves, to whom they should hearken? Thus Origen *Class. 1.* in his excellent books against *Celsus*, shews the necessity *cap. 3.* of the prophetic office among the Jews from hence; for *Sect. 12.* *C. Celsus.* saith he, *1. 1.* it being written in their Law that the Gentiles hearkened unto Oracles and Divinations; but God would not suffer *Deut. 18.* it to be so among them, it presently follows, A Prophet will *14.* the Lord God raise up in the midst of thee, &c. Therefore, saith he, when the Nations round about them had their Oracles, and several ways of divination, all which were strictly prohibited among the Jews, if the Jews had no way of fore-knowing things to come, it had been almost impossible, considering the great curiosity of humane nature, to have kept them from despising the Law of Moses, or apostatizing to the heathen Oracles, or setting up something like them among themselves. Which interpretation of his seems to have a great deal of reason, not only from the coherence of the words here, but from the Analogy of many other precepts of the Law of Moses, which it is most certain have a respect to the customs of the Idolatrous Nations round about them. Another reason why it is most probable, that by this is understood a succession of Prophets, is the charge which follows against false Prophets, and the rules to discover them, v. 20, 21, 22. which had not been so pertinent and coherent, if the opposition did not lie between the order of true Prophets among the Jews, and the false Prophets which should rise up in the midst of them. And that which yet further justifies this interpretation, is, that there is no other place in the whole Pentateuch which doth expressly speak of a succession of Prophets, if this be not understood of it; and is it any ways probable a matter of so great moment and consequence should be wholly pretermitted? Especially when we find it

so exactly performed in the succeeding ages of the *Jewish Commonwealth* ; their immediate Rulers like *Dictators at Rome*, after *Moses* death, being most raised up by immediate incitation and impulse from *God*, and many of them inspired with a *Spirit of prophetic*. How should the *Jews* have expected these, or obeyed them when they appeared, had not *God* foretold it to them, and provided them for it by the *Law of Moses* ?

Neither did these *Prophets* arise singly among them, like blazing *Stars*, one in an age to portend future events, but whole *Constellations* of them sometimes appeared together ; yea, so many smaller *Prophets* were sometimes united together, as made up a perfect *Galaxy*, when they were entered into *Societies*, and became *Schools of the Prophets* ; for such we frequently read of in *Scripture*. The original and institution of which may cast a further light into our present design, and shew us the little reason the *Jews* could have to expect miracles from them to confirm their doctrine, who were brought up in the knowledge of their *Law*, and were called out from their several societies into the prophetic office by the immediate incitation of *God* himself. Which being so commonly known among them, there needed no such extraordinary proofs to manifest the *Divine authority* by which they were employed. Two things then we shall endeavour to clear ; First, the original and institution of these *Schools of the Prophets* ; and secondly, that it was the ordinary course for the *Prophets* by employment to be, taken forth of these societies wherein they were educated. First, for the original and institution of these *Schools of the Prophets*. The first *Seminaries*, or places of institution among the *Jews*, were the *Cities* of the *Levites*, which were dispersed up and down in the several *Tribes of Israel* ; *God* thereby turning that into a blessing, which was pronounced as a curse upon *Levi* by his Father *Jacob*, viz. that he should be divided in *Jacob*, and scattered in *Israel*. But though the fulfilling of that prophecy might be the primary ground of that scattering, yet it is evident that *God* aimed at some further good in it, both in reference to the *Levites* and the *Israelites*. *Lyra* undertakes to assign four reasons of this distribution of the

Gen: 49. 7.

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Chieft of the Levites among the Tribes. (1) because if they *Josh. 11.* had lived but in one Tribe, the worship of God would have seemed to have been confined to that Tribe. (2) because they would have been a burden to that Tribe they had their habitations in. (3) from the equity of being maintained by all, who served for all. (4) because it was their office to teach the people, and therefore it was necessary they should live among them. These reasons are most of them opposed by *Abul. in Josh. 21. c. 7. & 8.* *Abulensis*, but defended by others. The last is that which must insist on, it being the peculiar office of the *Levites* to teach the people; so 2 Chron. 35. 4. And said unto the *Levites*, *qui erudiebant omnem Israel*, as *Varatius* renders it, *Hebr. l. 2. c. 3. f. 4.* who taught all Israel; and *Masius* insists on that as the great reason of their dispersion; to be ready to teach the Law among the *Israelites*. But yet all those who are agreed that teaching the Law was the duty of the *Levites*, are not yet agreed of the manner of that teaching; for there being two parts of their Law, the one ceremonial and judicial, and the other moral and spiritual, the question is, whether of these two did belong to, or was performed by the *Priests* and *Levites*. There are many who understand all that Office of teaching which belonged to the *Priests* and *Levites*, to be merely concerning the ceremonial part of the Law, i. e. deciding all cases of controversy which should arise concerning their ceremonial worship, which in *Levit. 10. 10.* is called putting a difference between holy and unholy, and between clean and unclean. But it seems somewhat strange that God should take so great care about the shell and outside of his worship, and none at all for the moral and spiritual part of it, especially when he had set apart a whole Tribe merely for his own service, and freed them from all other employments, that they might have a greater liberty to attend upon the things relating to his service; especially when it is mentioned as the duty of the *Priests* and *Levites* *Lev. 10. 10* to teach all the statutes which the Lord had spoken to them by *Deut. 33. 10.* the hand of Moses, and that they shall teach Jacob thy statutes, and Israel thy Law. Which notwithstanding what *Abarbanel* and others say, must certainly comprehend as well the moral as the ceremonial part of Moses his Law. And the

Mal. 2. 7. *Priests lips are said to preserve knowledge; and God saith, they should seek the Law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts. Do these things import no more then merely deciding the cases of the ceremonial Law? But whatever Gods intention in the institution of the Levites was, we find not much in Scripture of what they did for the promoting the moral and spiritual part of divine worship: but it is no news to hear that Societies instituted for good and pious ends, should degenerate from the first intention of the Founders of them; and thus it is probable it was with the Levites, who finding the most of their benefit and advantage to come in by the ceremonial cases, might grow more negligent of the moral part of divine service, which brought no secular emolument to them.*

9. 3. *And thence we read not of these Schools of the Prophets, which were Societies in order to spiritual instruction, till about the time of Samuel, and many think him to have been the first Author of them. For it is evident, that about his time the Priesthood was grown to a great degeneracy, and men thereby estranged from the worship of God, so that*

1 Sam. 3. 1. *there seemed almost a necessity then of restoring some Societies, who might have a special eye to the spiritual part of Gods worship and service. The occasion of the institution of them, seems to have been from the resort which the people had to the high places for sacrificing, during the captivity or uncertain abode of the Ark of God, after the desolation of Shiloh: now the people resorting to these places to perform their solemnities, it was so ordered, that a company of*

1 Sam. 9. 12, 13. *Prophets should be there resident to bless the sacrifices, and instruct the people. Two of these places with these Societies in them we find mentioned in the time of Samuel. The first mentioned, 1 Sam. 10. 5, 10. which cannot be the same with Ramah, although the Syriack and Arabick versions so render it. For Samuel had his own residence in Ramah whither Saul went to him, 1 Sam. 9. 18, 19. but in this chapter we find Samuel sending Saul on a journey from him beyond Bethel and the plain of Tabor, and there tells him he should meet with the company of Prophets upon the hill of God, ver. 5. Some think it was called the Hill of*

God, because of its height, as the Cedars of God, and the mountains of God for the highest: so *Tirinus* understands it, but *Menchius* far more probably, *quia in ea erat catus & veluti schola prophetarum*. The *Chaldee Paraphrast* renders it, *ad collem in quo arca Domini*; *R. Solomon* makes this hill to be *Kirjath-jearim*, and therefore called the hill of God, because the Ark was there in the house of *Abinadab* in the hill. *1 Sam. 7. 1.* But *Lyra* thinks he hath proved, that before this time the Ark was removed from *Kirjath-jearim* to *Mizpah*, but *Abulensis* more probably conceives it was never removed thither, and withal thinks this hill of God to be no other then *Gibeah* of *Benjamin*, where *Saul* inhabited; and thence the wonder was the greater, to see him Prophesie among those who had known his former life and education. The other place is *Naioth* in *Ramah*, where was a high place whither the people came to sacrifice; this *Ramah* seems to have been the place of *Samuels* nativity, called *Ramathaim Sophim*, which the *Syriack version* renders *collis specularum* (some who would be ready to improve every thing for their purpose, would think it was so called in allusion to the employment of the young Students there. So *Heinsius* conceives *שרה עמ* to be understood, *Numb. 23. 14* the place of watchmen, from which word saith he, without doubt the *Greeks* derived their *ορειναι*, who were wont in such high places to observe the course and motions of the heavens; But to pass by such frivolous conjectures) It seems a great deal more probable, that this *Ramah* which the *Septuagint* by a slight mutation of the initial letters calls *Aggadalu*, was the same with *Arimathaa*, the Town of *Joseph* mentioned in the Gospel. But the place where the school of the Prophets was, seems to have been, with greatest conveniency, for a place of education, at some distance from the Town. *Vatablus* conceives it was built in the fields of *Ramah*, and the word *Naioth*, saith *Pet. Martyr*, properly signifies pastures, and some remote places; *qua fere sunt studiis aptissima*. The *Chaldee Paraphrast* renders *Naioth* by *כולל מדרש* a College or School of prophetic education: over this College *Samuel* himself was President, as most understand that place, *1 Sam. 19. 20.* And when they saw the company of Prophets

prophecy, and Samuel standing as appointed over them; Jonathan renders it, & *Semuellem stantem docentem super eos*. To which we may well apply the words of Philo, speaking of the Jewish manner of instruction, *τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἡγουμένου & ὑπογυίου*. Philo de v. *ἡ δὲ διδασκαλία, ἣς ὁ ἐκπαιδευόμενος ἐστὶν ἀλλοτρίαν ἢ βαλμυδίαν, πρὸς τὸν ἰδὸν ἔχει & κλον.* The President going before and teaching, the rest increasing in goodness, and improving in life and manners.

§. 4.

Neither can we think so good and useful an institution should presently degenerate or be turned into another channel; and therefore some conceive that the most noted Prophets to the time of David were the Presidents of these Colleges; such as besides Samuel were Helcana, Gad, Nathan, Heman, and Jeduthun; and that they selected out the choicest and most hopeful of the young Levites, and here educated them, together with the Nazarites which came out of other tribes. And it seems very probable, that in all the most noted high places whether they went to sacrifice, there were such Schools erected after the first institution of them. Thence we read of such multitudes of the Prophets together in the time of Ahab, 1 Kings 18. 4. for when Jezebel cut off the Prophets of the Lord, Obadiah took an hundred and hid them in caves; certainly their number was very great, when an hundred might be saved without missing. The chief places where they resided, seem to have been Bethel, 2 Kings 2. 3. and Jericho, which was a large College; for therein we read of fifty sons of the Prophets standing together out of their number, 2 Kings 2. 5. 7. 15. and Gilgal which had been a place of Religion from the first entrance into Canaan, there we find the sons of the Prophets sitting before Elisha, 2 Kings 4. 38. It seems most probable, that the purity of Gods worship among the ten tribes after the defection in the time of Jeroboam was preserved by the Prophets in their several Schools and places of habitation, which had sufficient foundation in that place, 2 Kings 4. 23. where the Shunammite's husband asks her wherefore she would go to the man of God that day, seeing it was neither new-moon nor Sabbath. Whereby it is both evident, that the Prophets did undertake the office of instructing the people on their solemn

solemn Festivals, and that it was their custome to resort to them for that end. Thus we see what care God took for the instruction of his people in the time of so general an Apostacy as that of the ten tribes was, when the Church of God could not be known by that constant visibility and outward glory which some speak so much of, but was then clouded in obscurity, and shrouded it self under the mantles of some Prophets which God continued among them, and that not by any lineal succession neither, though the Jews would fain make the gift of Prophecy to be a kind of Cabala too, and conveyed in a constant succession from one Prophet to another. Neither were these Schools of the Prophets only in Israel, but in Judah likewise was God known, and his Name was great among these Schools there. In Jerusalem it self there was a Colledge where Huldah the Prophetess lived, 2 Kings 22. 14. some render *Misbna* in *secunda urbis parte*; for Jerusalem was divided into the upper and nether part of the City. *Abulensis* and *Lyra* will have it refer to the three walls of the City in which the three chief parts of it were comprized; in the first, the Temple and the Kings Palace; in the second, the Nobles and the Prophets houses; and in the third, the common people. Josephus seems to favour the division of the City into three parts, but Pineda thinks the second part of the City was most inhabited by Artificers; and that the Prophets, and the wise men, and such as frequented the Temple, most dwelt in the City of David within the first wall; and therefore he conjectures that the Colledge was upon Mount Sion, (and so properly called Sion Colledge) and he explains that house which wisdom is said to have built and born out her seven pillars, Prov. 9. 1. by this Colledge which he supposeth was built by Solomon in Mount Sion, and thence ver. 3. she is said to cry upon the highest places of the City. Thus much may serve concerning the original and institution of these Schools of the Prophets.

I now come to the second thing promised concerning the Schools of the Prophets, which is, that it was Gods ordinary method to call those persons out of these Schools, whom he did employ in the discharge of the propheticall office. Two things will be necessary for the clearing of this: First, what sen-

*V. Manass.
Ben Israel.
Concil. ia
Exod. 9. 35*

*Ios. de bell.
Iud. l. 6.
c. 6.
Pineda de
rebus Sol.
l. 3. c. 18.*

§. 5.

endency

gency their education in those Schools had towards the fitting them for their propheticall office. Secondly, what evidence the Scripture give us that God called the Prophets out from these Colledges. The first of these is very requisite to be cleared, because the propheticall office depending upon immediate inspiration, it is hard to conceive what influence any antecedent and preparatory dispositions can have upon receiving the propheticall spirit. It is commonly known how much the generality of Jewish Writers do insist on the necessity of these qualifications antecedent to a spirit of prophecie. 1. An excellent natural temper. 2. Good accomplishments both of wit and fortune. 3. Separation from the world. 4. Congruity of place (which they make proper to Judaea) 5 Opportunity of time. 6. And divine inspiration. These are so largely dis-

V. G. Vor in
Mum fan-
dam. leg. c.
7. Sect. 1.
Mr. Smith.
of Prophecy
ch. 8.

coursed of by many learned men from Jewish Writers, that it will be both tedious and impertinent to recite much of their opinions concerning them; who, since they have lost the gift of prophecie, seem to have lost too that wisdom and natural understanding, which they make one of the most necessary qualifications of a Prophet. It is not easie to imagine what subserviency riches could have to a propheticall spirit, unless the Jews be of Simon Magnus his opinion, that these gifts of the Holy Ghost may be purchased with money; and if so, they think themselves in as likely a way to bid fair for a propheticall spirit as any people in the world. Or is it that they think it impossible any without them should have that free, cheerful, and generous spirit, which they make so necessary to a prophetick spirit, that it is an axiome of great authority with them, *Spiritus sanctus non residet super hominem mercatum*; and they think Elisha his fit of passion did excuse his prophetick spirit from him, which he was faine to retrieve again with a fit of Musick. There are only two sorts of those antecedent dispositions which seem to bear any affinity with the prophetick spirit: And those are such as tended to the improvement of their natural faculties, and such as tended to their advancement in piety, and consequently to the subduing all irregular motions in their souls: Not that either of these did concur by way of efficiency to the production of a spirit of prophecie (which is an opinion

Maimo-

Maimonides seems very favourable to) but that God might *More Ne-*
 make choice particularly of such persons, to remove all pre-*vouch. l. 2.*
 judices against them in those they were sent unto. For no-*c. 36.*
 thing could possibly dissatisfie them more concerning divine
 inspiration, then if the person who pretended to it were of
 very weak and shallow intellectuals, or known to be of an
 irregular conversation. In order therefore to the fuller sa-
 tisfaction of men concerning these two qualifications, this
 Institution of them in the Schools of the Prophets was of
 great suberviency, because therein their only employment
 was to improve in knowledge, and especially in true piety. This
 latter being the most necessary disposition, since the Apo-
 stle hath told us that the Prophets were Holy men, who spake *2 Pet. 1. 21.*
 as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. And in order to this,
 the greatest part we can find of the exercises of those who
 were educated in these Schools of the Prophets, were instru-
 ctions in the Law, and the solemn celebration of the praises
 of God: Which appears in Scripture to have been their chief
 employment as Prophets, and by which they are said to pro-
 phesie: So at Gibeah at the Oratory there, we find a compa-
 ny of Prophets coming down from the high place with a Psal-
 tery, a Tabret and pipe, and a Harp before them, and pro-
 phesying. *1 Sam. 10: 5.*

It may seem somewhat strange to consider what relati-
 on these Musical instruments had to the prophesying here
 mentioned. Are Musical notes like some seeds Naturalists
 speak of, which will help to excite a prophetick spirit? Or do
 they tend to elevate the spirits of men, and so put them in-
 to a greater capacity of Enthusiasm? Or is it because Mu-
 sick is so excellent for allaying the tumults of inward passi-
 ons, and so fitting the soul for the better entertainment of
 the Divine Spirit? Or was all this prophesying here spo-
 ken of nothing else but vocal and instrumental Musick? So
 some indeed understand it, that it was only the praising God
 with spiritual songs and melody; wherein one as the Praeten-
 tor began a hymn, which the rest took from him and carried
 on. I confess it carries the fairest probability with it, that
 this prophesying with Musical instruments was at their pla-
 ces and times of sacrifice, an adjunct, if not a part of the so-
 lemn.

§. 6.

solemn service of God : which was managed chiefly by the *Quire of the Sons of the Prophets* which were resident there, and were trained up in all exercises of *piety and devotion*. But yet I cannot see any reason to think that all this *prophesying* was merely singing of *Hymns*, and playing upon their *Musical instruments* to them, as some imagine, because there seems to be implied some *immediate impulses* of a *prophetick spirit*, by what *Samuel* said to *Saul*, that when he came among the *Prophets*, *the spirit of the Lord would come upon him, and he should prophesy with them, and he should become another man*. What strange impulse and wonderful transformation was this merely for *Saul* to joyn with the *Prophets* in their praises of *God* ? And this needed not so much admiration as followed there upon this action of *Saul*, that it should become a *Proverb*, *Is Saul also among the Prophets* ? Certainly *Saul* was a very great hater of all *spiritual Musick* before, if it became a *Proverb* merely for his being present at, or joyning with this company in singing their *Hymns*. Therefore others think that those who are said particularly to prophesie at these *Musick meetings*, were some persons as chief among the rest, who having their spirits elevated by the *Musick*, did compose *Hymns* upon the place by a *Divine Energy* inwardly moving their minds. So that there were properly *divine raptures* in some of them, which transported them beyond the ordinary power of fancy or imagination, in dictating such *Hymns* as might be suitable for the design of celebrating the honour of *God*.

1 Sam. 10.
6.

1 Sam 10.
11.

6. 7.

Neither may it seem strange that such an *Enthusiastick Spirit* should seize on them only at such *solemn times*, since we read in the *New Testament* of a like exercise of such gifts in the *Church of Corinth*, 1 Cor. 14. 26. where we see in coming together every one had a *Psalm*, a *Doctrine*, a *Tongue*, a *Revelation*, &c. Whereby it appears that they were inspired upon the place; *etiam extemporales Hymni saepe ab afflaturerant*, as *Grotius* there observes; as we see it in frequent instances in Scripture of *Simeon* and *Anna*; *Moses* and *Miriam*, *Deborah*, and *Isaiah*; and in the *Christian Church* after that *Landflood* of inspired gifts was much abated in the *Church*, they kept up a *custome* much like to these *extemporal*

temporal hymns, as appears evidently by Tertullian, *post Apol. c. 39.*
aquam mannalem, & lumina ut quisque de Scripturis sanctis
vel de proprio ingenio potest, provocatur in medium Deo ca-
nere; After they had ended their *Love-feasts*, they begun
 their *Hymns*, which were either taken from the *Scriptures*,
 or of their own composition. Which *Pliny* takes notice of as
 a great part of the *Christian* worship, that they did *secum* ^{Ep. l. 10.}
invicem carmen Christo quasi Deo dicere, they joyued in sing- ^{Ep. 97.}
ing hymns to Christ as God. Nay, we find something very
 parallel to this preserved among the ruins of the *Heathen*
worship; such were the *Assamenta* among the old *Romans*,
 which were peculiarly sung to the honour of some particular
 God; thence the *Assamenta Jannalia, Junonia, Minervia*, ^{Conject. in}
 which were *privæ poemata & carmina in singulos eos Deos* ^{Varr. p. 121}
conscripta, as the learned *Joseph Scaliger* observes. So like-
 wise the old *Greeks* had their *solemn hymns* to their *Gods*,
 some to the propitious *Gods*, which they called *κατὰ ὕμνους*,
 and the *Latins* properly *Indigitamenta*, and *carmen calatori-*
um; others they had to their *Vejoves*, or *lava numina*,
 which they called *ὕμνους ἀντινομίους*; the *Latins Carmen*
Aurrucales; but besides these, they had some peculiar to
 the several *Deities*, as *ὕμνος* to *Diana*, *Παιάν* to *Apollo*,
Κέρ to *Ceres*, *Διθύραμβος* to *Bacchus*, *Αδονιδία* to *Ado-*
nis, as *Proclus* tells us in his *Chrestomathia*. And it is withal ^{Apud. Phor.}
 evident, that the *Heathens* thought some of their *Priests* in- ^{libl. Cod.}
 spired while they were performing these *solemn devotions* to ^{239.}
 the *Gods* (which probably was by *Satan*, as many other
 things in *Heathen worship* taken up in imitation of these in-
 spired hymns, and *Musick* used by the sons of the *Prophets*)
 but their hymns were so composed, as to be fit rather to trans-
 port men beyond the power of their reason, then to compose
 and sweeten it, which was suitable to the fanatick *Enthusi-*
asm, which was so common among them. So *Proclus* tells
 us that the *Io-Bacche* was βακαπνομένη & πολλὰ σπουδῶν, full
 of noise and din; and the *Diθύραμβος* was κακηνμένη & πολὺ
 ἢ ἐκστασίου, μετὰ χορίας ἱερῶν, a kind of extatick *Morice-*
dence, and their *Priests* were apprehended by them to be
 under a real *Enthusiasm* at these *Solemnities*. So the *Co-*
rybantes are described rather like mad men than meer *Enthu-*
siasts

Geogr. l.
10.

safts by Strabo; they were ἐθυσιαστοὶ μετὰ καὶ βαρυχοί, as he describes them, dancing about with their cymbals and drums, and arms and pipes (as though a Bedlam hath been broke loose among them) yet this was in high esteem among them; for as Strabo after saith, ὅτι ἐθυσιαστοὶ ἐν τρισυνοίῃ μαθητῶν ἔχοντο δοῦλῶν, καὶ τῷ μαθητῇ ἵστατο ἀντιπάλαιον, this Enthusiasm seemed to have a divine touch with it, and to come very near to a prophetick Spirit.

But though the prophesying with Musick among the sons of the Prophets, might be by some extemporary hymns immediately dictated by the praeceptor of the Chorus; yet we are not to imagine any such frantick actions among them as were among the Curetes and Corybantes, it being always the Devils temper to overdo, when he strives to imitate, and in stead of solemn and set devotions to carry men beyond all sense and reason. The Spirit of God did never dictate any *Io Baccæ's* or *Dithyrambs* to transport and amuse the spirits of men; but those sweet airs which might both compose and elevate the spirits of all that heard them. For in probability the spirits of all these Prophets were as *Lutes* tuned to the same height, that when the Spirit of God did strike upon one of them, the rest presently answered to it, and so made up an entire Consort among them. So *Menesthim* thinks the Spirit of God not only moved the spirit of him who was the praeceptor, but the rest likewise who joyned with him; and they are said to prophecy, saith *Tormellus*, *forte quod non quascumq; sed Propheticas duntaxat cantiones praeceperent*; but from hence we clearly see what the great employment was in these Schools of the Prophets, which as the same Author expresseth it, was *statis horis de rebus divinis disserere & divinis laudibus vacare*; and thereby we understand what reference this institution had in order to the prophetical office, because the Spirit of God did much appear among them, and all their exercises tended to piety, and so did remove all prejudices from their persons, when God did send them abroad afterwards.

Annal. ad
A. M. 1945
Sect. 14.

§. 9.

And so it is evident he frequently did, not to say always, for that were to put too great a restraint upon the boundless spirit of God: For sometimes, as will appear afterwards,

God

God sent the Prophets upon extraordinary messages, and then furnished them with sufficient evidence of their Divine commission without being beholding to the Testimonials of the Schools of the Prophets. But besides these, God had a kind of *Leiger-Prophets* among his people; such were the most of those whom we read of in Scripture, which were no pen-men of the sacred Scripture; such in Davids time we may conceive Gad and Nathan, and afterwards we read of many other Prophets and Seers among them, to whom the people made their resort: Now these in probability were such as had been trained up in the *Prophetick Schools*, wherein the Spirit of God did appear, but in a more fixed and settled way than in the extraordinary Prophets whom God did call out on some more signal occasions, such as *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah* were. We have a clear foundation for such a distinction of Prophets in those words of *Amos* to *Amaziah*, *Amos* 7. 14. 15. *I was no Prophet, neither was I a Prophets son; but I was a herdsman, and a gatherer of Sycamore fruits: And the Lord took me as I followed the flock; and the Lord said unto me, Go prophesie to my people Israel.* Some understand the first words, *I was not a Prophet*, that he was not born a Prophet as *Jeremiah* was, not designed and set apart to it from his mothers womb; but I rather think by his not being a Prophet, he means he was none of those *resident Prophets* in the *Colledges* or *Schools* of them, not any of those who had led a *prophetick life*, and withdrawn themselves from converse with the world; nor was I (saith he) the son of a Prophet, i. e. not brought up in *discipleship* under those Prophets, and thereby trained up in order to the *prophetick function*. Non didici inter discipulos Prophetarum, as *Pellican* renders it; nec institutione qua filii Prophetarum quasi ad datum Prophetia à parentibus preparabantur, saith *Estius*. Non à puero educatus in Scholis Propheticis; so *Calvin* and most other modern *Interpreters* understand it as well as *Abarbinel* and the Jewish Writers: Whereby it is evident that Gods ordinary way for the Prophets, was to take such as had been trained up and educated in order to that end, although God did not tye up himself to this method, but sometimes called one from the Courts, as he did *Isaiah*; some-

1 Sam. 10.
12, 19, 24.

times one from the *herd*, as here he did *Amos*, and bid them go prophesie to the house of *Israel*. There was then a kind of a standing Colledge of Prophets among the *Israelites*, who shined as fixed Stars in the Firmament; and there were others who had a more planetary motion, and withal a more lively and resplendent illumination from the fountain of prophetick light. And further it seems that the Spirit of prophesie did not ordinarily seize on any, but such whose institution was in order to that end, by the great admiration which was caused among the people at *Sauls* so sudden prophesying, that it became a proverb, *Is Saul also among the Prophets?* which had not given the least foundation for an adage for a strange and unwonted thing, unless the most common appearances of the spirit of Prophesie had been among those who were trained up in order to it. Thus I suppose we have fully cleared the first reason why there was no necessity for the ordinary Prophets, whose chief office was instruction of the people, to prove their commission by miracles, because God had promised a succession of Prophets by *Moses*, and these were brought up ordinarily to that end among them: so that all prejudices were sufficiently removed from their persons without any such extraordinary power as that of miracles.

CHAP. V.

The tryal of Prophetical Doctrine.

Rules of trying Prophets established in the Law of Moses. The punishment of pretenders. The several sorts of false Prophets. The case of the Prophet at Bethel discussed. The tryal of false Prophets belonging to the great Sanhedrin. The particular rules whereby the Doctrine of Prophets was judged. The proper notion of a Prophet, not foretelling future contingencies; but having immediate Divine revelation. Several principles laid down for clearing the doctrine of the Prophets. 1. That immediate dictates of natural light are not to be the measure of Divine revelation. Several grounds for Divine revelation from natural light. 2. Whatever is directly repugnant to the dictates of nature, cannot be of Divine revelation. 3. No Divine revelation doth contradict a Divine positive Law without sufficient evidence of Gods intention to repeal that Law. 4. Divine revelation in the Prophets was not to be measured by the words of the Law, but by the intention and reason of it. The Prophetical office a kind of Chancery to the Law of Moses.

THE second reason why those Prophets whose main office was instruction of the people, or merely foretelling future events, needed not to confirm their doctrine by miracles, is, because they had certain rules of tryal by their Law whereby to discern the false Prophets from the true. So that if they were deceived by them, it was their own officiousness and inadvertency which was the cause of it. God in that Law which was confirmed by miracles undoubtedly Divine, had established a Court of tryal for Prophetick Spirits, and given such certain rules of procedure in it, that no men needed to be deceived unless they would themselves. And there was a greater necessity of such a certain way of tryal among them, because it could not otherwise be expected but in a Nation where a Prophetick Spirit was so common, there would be very many pretenders to it, who might much
endanger.

§. 1.

endanger the faith of the people unless there were some certain way to find them out. And the more effectually to deterre men either from counterfeiting a Prophetick Spirit, or from hearkening to such as did, God appointed a severe punishment for every such pretender, viz. upon legal conviction that he be punished with death. Deut. 18. 20. But the Prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other Gods, shall surely dye. The Jews generally understand this of strangling, as they do alwayes in the Law, when the particular manner of death is not expressed. And therein a false Prophet and a seducer were distinguished each from other, that a meer seducer was to be stoned to death under sufficient testimony, Deut. 13. 6, 10. But the false Prophet is there said in general only to be put to death, Deut. 13. 1, 5. The main difference between the seducer and false Prophet was, that the seducer sought by cunning persuasions and plausible arguments to draw them off from the worship of the true God; but the false Prophet alwayes pretended Divine Revelation for what he perswaded them to, whether he gave out that he had that revelation from the true God, or from Idols and false Gods. So that the meer pretence to Divine Revelation was that which God would have punished with so great severity.

§. 2. The Jews tell us of three sorts of Prophets who were to be punished with death by men, and three other sorts who were reserved to divine punishment: Of the first rank were these. 1. He that prophesied that which he had not heard, and for this they instance in Zedekiah the son of Chemaanah, who made him horns of iron and said, Thus saith the Lord; this was the lying Prophet. 2. He that spoke that which was revealed not to him but to another, and for this they instance in Hananiah the son of Azur, (but how truly I shall not determine) this was the Plagiary Prophet. 3. He that prophesied in the name of an Idol, as the Prophets of Baal did, this was the Idol-Prophet. These three when once fully convicted, were to be put to death. The other rank of those which were left to Gods hand consisted of these. 1. He that stifles and smothers his own Prophecy, as Jonas did; by which

V. Maimon.
de Idol. c. 5.
f. 1. et ibi
Vossium.

V. Except.
Gem. San-
hed. c. 10.
f. 3.

1 King. 22.

11.

Ier. 28. 11.

it may seem that when the *Divine Spirit* did overshadow the *understanding* of the *Prophets*, yet it offered no violence to their *faculties*, but left them to the free *determination* of their own *wills* in the *execution* of their *office*; but this must be understood of a lower degree of *prophecy*; for at sometimes their *prophecies* were as *fire* in their *bones*, that they were never at any rest till they had discharged their *office*. But withall by the example of *Jonas*, we see, that though the *Spirit* of *prophecy* like the *fire* on the *Altar* could only be kindled from *heaven*, yet it might be destroyed when it was not maintained with something to feed upon; or when it met not with suitable entertainment from the *Spirits* of those it fell upon, it might retreat back again to *heaven*, or at least lie hid in the *embers* till a new blast from the *Spirit* of *God* doth ἀναζωοποιᾷ, retrieve it into its former heat and activity. Thus it was with *Jonas*. 2. The other was, he that despised the words of a true Prophet; of such God saith *Deut.* 18. 19. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall not hearken to my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. Which *Maimonides* explains by מיתה בירי שנים death by the hands of God, which he thus distinguishes from the *Cereth*, that he makes the death *perfundam le-manu celi* to be less than the *Cereth*, because this latter continued in the soul after death, but the other was expiated by death; but generally they interpret it of a sudden death which falls upon the person. 3. The last is, he who hearkens not to the words of his own *Prophecy*; of which we have a most remarkable instance in *Scripture*, concerning the Prophet whom God sent to *Bethel* (whom *Tertullian* calls *Samuel*, the Jews *Hedua*) whom God destroyed in an unusual manner for not observing the command which God had given him, not to eat bread nor drink water at *Bethel*, nor turn again by the way he came. Neither was it any excuse to this Prophet that the old Prophet at *Bethel* told him that an Angel spake unto him by the word of the Lord that he should turn back. For, 1. Those whom God reveals his will unto, he gives them full assurance of it, in that they have a clear and distinct perception of God upon their own minds; and so they have no doubt but it is the word of the Lord which comes unto

Jer. 20. 9.

Maim. de-
perfundam le-
manu celi
gus c. 9. f. 4.
V. Ahar-
binet, de
Cereth.
apud Bux-
torf. de
spons. et
divort.
p. 132.
1 King. 13.
9.
Ver. 18.

De jejuniis
cap. 16.

unto them ; but this *Prophet* could have no such certainty of the *Divine Revelation* which was made to another, especially when it came immediately to contradict that which was specially enjoined him. 2. Where *God* commands a *Prophet* to do any thing in the pursuit of his message, there he can have no ground to question whether *God* should command it or no by another *Prophet* ; because that was in effect to thwart the whole design of his message. So it was in this action of the *Prophets* ; for *God* intended his not eating and drinking in *Bethel* to testify how much he loathed and abominated that place since its being polluted with *Idolatry*. 3. He might have just cause to question the integrity of the old *Prophet*, both because of his living in *Bethel*, and not openly, according to his office, reproving their *Idolatry*, and that *God* should send him out of *Judea* upon that very errand, which would not have seemed so probable, if there had been true *Prophets* resident upon the place. 4. The thing he desired him to do was not an act of that weight and importance on which *God* useth to send his word to any *Prophets*, much less by one *Prophet* to contradict what he had said by another, and therefore *Tertullian* saith of him, *panam deserti jejunii luit*, *God* punished him for breaking his fast at *Bethel* : and therefore that message of this *Prophet* seemed to gratify more mans carnal appetite, then usually the actions of *Prophets* did, which were most times matters of hardship and uneasiness to the flesh. 5. However all these were, yet he yielded too soon, especially having so much reason on his side as he had, being well assured that *God* had commanded him, he had reason to see some clear evidence of a countermand, before he altered his mind : if he had seen any thing upon trial which might have staggered his faith, he ought to have made his immediate recourse to *God* by prayer for the settlement of his mind and removal of this great temptation. But so easily to hearken to the words of a lying *Prophet*, which contradicted his own message, argued either great unbelief as to his own commission, or too great easiness and inadvertency in being drawn aside by the old *Prophet*. And therefore *God* made that old *Prophet* himself in the midst of his entertainment, as with a hand writing

against

against the wall to tell him, he was weighed in the ballance and found too light, and therefore his life should be taken from him. Thus we see how dangerous a thing it was either to counterfeit a Spirit of Prophecy, or to hearken to those who did.

It is the generally received opinion among the Jewish §. 3.
Doctors, that the cognizance and tryal of false Prophets did
peculiarly belong to the great Sanhedrin. And that this
was one end of its institution. So *Maimonides* after he hath *De Idolol.*
largely discoursed of the punishment of a seducer, and speak- c. 5. f. 11.
ing of that of a false Prophet, he layes this down as a standing
rule among them ואין רגין נביא השקר אלא ככר של עץ
No false Prophet was to be judged but in the Court of seventy
one; which was the number of the great Sanhedrin. And
there is some thing looks very like this in the proceedings of
the people of Israel against the Prophet *Jeremiah*; for the Jer. 16. 8.
people, the Priests and the Prophets, they laid hold on him;
and immediately after we read that the Princes of Judah
(by whom *Grotius* understands the Senators of the great
Sanhedrin) they come up from the Kings house to the house of Ver. 10:
the Lord, and sat down in the entry of the new gate of the Lords
house: (which probably was the place where the great San- V. Grot. in
hedrin sat) where after a particular examination of *Jeremiah*, l. et Selden.
they acquit him as a person not worthy to dye upon a counter- de Syl. l. 2.
feiting Prophecy, but declare that he spake unto them in the c. 15. f. 4. et
name of the Lord. And in this sense *Grotius* likewise un- l. 3. c. 6. f. 4.
derstands what is said of *Zedekiah* concerning *Jeremiah* to Jer. 16. 16.
the Princes of Judah afterwards, behold he is in your hand;
for the King is not he that can do ought against you, i. e. saith
Grotius, in *manibus Synedrii, cujus est judicare de Prophetis*
vero aut falso. And to this many make those words of our
Saviour refer, that it is impossible a Prophet should perish out
of Jerusalem, because the seat of the great Sanhedrin was in Luk. 13. 33
Jerusalem; and so elsewhere our Saviour saith, O Jerusalem,
Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets and stonest them
which are sent unto thee, because there it was the true Pro-
phets were destroyed as though they had been false ones, and
Gods own messengers punished with the death of seducers,
which was lapidation. And on this very account many are

of opinion that *our Saviour* was condemned by the *Sanhedrin* at *Jerusalem*; which is supposed to have been assembled in the house of *Caiaphas* the *High Priest*, when *Christ* was carried *thither* for examination: which some think to have been at his lodgings in the *Temple*, others at his *Palace* in the *City*. For we read, that the *chief Priests*, and the *Elders*,

Matth. 26.

59.

and all the *Council* were met together at the *High Priests Palace* in order to *our Saviours* tryal. The next morning they were met *early* together again in order to the further scanning of this *business*: but they seem not to examine *Christ* concerning a *true spirit* of Prophecy, but concerning his being the *Messias*, and calling himself the *Son of God*, and so they would seem rather to proceed upon the *Law* against *blasphemy*, then that against *false Prophets*.

Matth. 26.

63.

§. 4.

But that which was the greatest security of the people against the imposture of false Prophets, was the certain rules of judging them, which were laid down in the *Law of Moses*. Which may be comprehended under these two heads, such as concern their doctrine, or such as concern their predictions. First, such as concerned the Prophets doctrine, which should especially be looked after because the main office of a Prophet was to be *interpres & internuncius divina voluntatis*, to be a revealer of Gods will to men. For the primary notion of a Prophet doth not lie in foretelling future events, but in declaring and interpreting to the world the mind of God which he receives by immediate revelation from himself. So that the receiving what he makes known by immediate revelation, is that which formerly constitutes a Prophet, but it is wholly extrinsecal and accidental what time his Prophecy respects, whether past, present, or to come; but because future contingencies are the furthest out of the reach of humane understanding, therefore the predictions of such have been chiefly looked on as the chief note and character of a Prophet, as being apprehended to be the strongest evidence of Divine revelation: And from hence it is in Scripture that the Patriarchs as Abraham and others are called Prophets, not because

Psal. 105.

15.

Gen. 10. 7.

of any predictions uttered by them, but because of the frequency of immediate divine revelations among them. And hence likewise those in the *New Testament* who expounded the

the *Scriptures* by *immediate inspiration*, are called *Prophets*, and this was the *Σωζαντες* spoken of by the *Apostle*, the exposition of the *hidden mysteries* of the *Old Testament* by an immediate inspiration. And there is no word in the *Hebrew* for a *Prophet*, which may not equally respect all differences of time, but every one doth import *immediate inspiration*, for *נביא* properly is one *qui revelat abscondita*: *נאמר* a *Secr* chiefly respects the clear representation of the intellectual species, by the *lumen propheticum* to the understanding, and *נאמר* carries an equal indifferency to all circumstances of times.

1 Cor 14.
26.

Vid Aste.
di Tiso.
proph. p. 53.

This being then the chief notion of a *Prophet*, whatever he declared as the *mind and will* of *God*, must be searched and examined to see what *consonancy* it hath thereto. For the question which *Moses* supposeth, is founded upon clear and evident reason, *And if thou shalt say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken?* For it being plain that there may be *false Prophets* as well as *true*, we had need of some certain *rules* to judge of what is delivered for *divine revelation*. For the clearing of which important question, I lay down these principles.

Deut. 18.
21.

The immediate dictates of *natural light*, are no sufficient standard to judge of *divine revelation* by. I mean not in reference to *consonancy* or *repugnancy* to *natural light*, but in reference to the extent and latitude of *divine revelation*, i.e. that *natural light* doth not consist in it whatever may be known of *God* or of his *will*; and that upon these reasons.

I.

1. It implies no *repugnancy* to any dictate of *nature*, that *God* should reveal any thing more of his *mind and will*, than is contained in the *light of nature*. 2. *Nature* reacheth, as to *matters* concerning *religion*, no further than the obligation to *duty*, but leaves the particular determination of the manner of *obedience* to *divine positive Laws*, as is clear in reference to the *time*, *place*, and *particular duties of worship*. 3. *Nature* owning an *universal obligation* to the *will of God* in whatever he shall command, doth suppose a *power in God* to command what he pleaseth. 4. *Nature* is sensible of its own *decays*, and the *imperfection* of its own *light*, and therefore seems rather to require further *illumination*, than to put

any bar against it. 5. *Mans happiness* being a free gift of God, it stands to the highest reason that he should have the prescribing of the conditions which are in order to it; now these conditions being the *rules*, not of Gods nature, but of his *arbitrary will*, it is impossible that *natural light* could ever reach to the full discovery of them. 6. It hath been the *general sense* of all Nations in the world; that God may reveal more of his will then nature can reach unto; which sense discovers its self in two things. 1. *Praying* to their several gods for direction. 2. *Hearkening* after pretended *Oracles*, which the Devil could never have had that advantage of *deceiving* the world by, had it not been for this general sense of mankind, that there wanted some particular revelation from God to make men happy. So then this may be assumed as a principle, that God may reveal more of his mind and will to mankind, then he hath done by the dictates of mere natural light and reason.

2. *Whatever speaks a direct repugnancy to any of the fundamental dictates of nature, cannot be of divine revelation.*
- §. 6. For those being founded, not upon any positive or arbitrary will, but upon those inward impressions which are derived from the divine nature its self, it cannot in reason be supposed that God should commission any to enervate his own fundamental Law: and so by one will to contradict another. *Placitum Regis* must never stand against the *Placita Corona*; Those things which depend upon fundamental and established Laws hold good against any positive sentence or declaration of a Princes will; Because he is supposed to have bound up himself by the established Laws; and therefore any thing else which comes from him, contrary to them, is supposed not to be the will of the Prince, but of the persons persuading him to it. But this now cannot be supposed in God, that he should be any wayes drawn to cassate the obligation of what is imprinted upon the souls of men as his own Law. But yet we must distinguish between nulling the general obligation, and altering the particular nature of any thing which depends upon that general Law; the first, in any case is impossible, that any divine revelation should make it not to be mans duty to obey his maker, or not to be a sin to commit murder,

murder, to lye, or to steal from another; but there may come a particular revelation from God to alter the respects and nature of such things, as do immediately depend upon his own dominion; as the lives of persons and the properties of things are; and thus God did reveal to Abraham that he should go and sacrifice his son, which had been no murder when done upon Gods immediate command, and for a sacrifice to himself; and therefore would have been acceptable as a testimony of entire obedience (which God did accept without the act) and so the Israelites taking the Egyptians Jewels, and dispossessing the Canaanites, did depend upon Gods immediate disposal of these things to them; which otherwise had been a sin in them; and no doubt was so to any that were unsatisfied whether God had immediately commanded it or no. Or from hence to infer any general rule, is no doubt a breach of divine commands, and contrary to his nature and will.

Where God hath established a positive Law, prescribing a form and manner wherein he will be worshipped, it is sufficient evidence of a false Prophet, to go about to null the obligation of that Law; unless there be as great evidences given, that God did intend the establishing a new Law by that person, as he did at first the institution of the old by the hand of Moses. This latter clause is inserted, to shew that the succeeding of the doctrine of Christ into the place of the Law of Moses, doth not bear any repugnancy to the Hypothesis laid down, there being greater evidences of Gods intending the abolishing the ceremonial Law by the Gospel of Christ, then there were of the establishment of it by Moses. But of those afterwards. I now only speak of such as upon the meer presence of divine revelation, should destroy any precepts of an established positive Law; and this, as far as we can find, was the great rule the Jews went by, if any thing were spoken by any Prophet, contrary to the Law of Moses, or tending to the alteration of the worship of God established thereby, he was accounted a false Prophet. The modern Jews to justify themselves in their own unbelief, as to the doctrine of Christ, extend this further then the Law doth; for they enlarge it to all the precepts of the ceremonial Law; whereas God in the Law

3.
§. 7.

Law seems to limit it to the *Moral Law*, and chiefly insists on the three first precepts of the *Decalogue*; and therefore condemns such a one as spake in the name of the Lord, when he had not commanded them, *Deut.* 18. 20. and such as endeavoured to bring in idolatry, *Deut.* 12. 1, 2, 3. where though the false Prophet should offer to do signs and wonders before them, yet if his intention were to draw them to worship false gods, they were not to hearken unto him. And therefore *Maimonides*, where he largely disputes about the truth of

*De fundam
log. c. 8.
sect. 7.*

prophesies, layes this down as a certain rule: *Si Prophetæ surrexerit, atque magna miracula aut prodigia fecerit & adhibuerit falsitatis convincere Prophetiam Moſis M. N. istum non audimus, quia certo novimus prodigium prastigium aut incantationibus productum esse*, as *Vorſinus* renders him. If a Prophet do never so great miracles, and seeks to convince Moſes of falshood, we are not to hearken to him, for we know that they are not done by the power of God, but by the illusions of the

*De Idola-
lat. cap. 5.
sect. 9.*

D. vil. And elsewhere he tells us, that if any one pretends to prophecy *בשם אלהים* in the name of Idols, they must not so much as dispute with him, nor answer him, nor desire any signs or miracles from him; and if of himself he shews any, we are not to regard or mind them; for, saith he, whoever doth but doubts in his mind concerning them, he breaks that command,

Deut. 13 3

and thou shalt not hearken to the words of that Prophet. So that the doctrine once established, ought to be our most certain rule, according to which we must judge of all pretendents to miracles; if their design be to draw men off from Gods Word, we are not to hearken to what they either say or do.

4.
§. 8.

The doctrine of those Prophets who seek not to introduce Idolatry, must not be measured by a strict conformity to the words of Moſes his Law, but to the main reason and intention of it. The great reason of this is, because God did not intend the Jews should always rest in the Pedagogy of the Ceremonial Law, but sent them Prophets to train them up by degrees, and to fit them for a state of greater perfection; and therefore it would be very unreasonable to judge whether they were true Prophets or no exactly by that, which they came gradually to wean them from: which were all one, as to try

one whether he were grown a man or no, by the swaddling clothes he wore when he was a child. God tempered the Ceremonial Law much according to the condition and capacity of the persons it was prescribed to, and therefore the sanctities of it did immediately resp. & their temporary concerns; but we are not to think the end of that dispensation was to be merely a Covenant for the Land of Promise, but as the Cherubims in the Temple did alwayes look towards the Mercy-seat, so did this whole Oeconomy look towards the coming of the Messiah. But it was wth the generality of the Jews, as it is wth Ignorant people, who looking up to the heavens, cannot fancy the stars to be any bigger then they seem to them; but Astronomers by the help of their Optick tubes and Telescopes, do easily discern the just magnitude of them; so the Jews ordinarily thought there was no more in those types and shadows, then was visibly represented to them; but such as had the help of the Divine Spirit (the best Telescope to discern the day-star from on high wth) could easily look through those prospectives, in o the most glorious mysteries of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. These types being like triangular Prisms, that must be set in a due light and posture, before they can represent that great variety of spiritual mysteries which was contained in them. Now the great office of the Prophets was to administer this light to the people, and to direct them in those excellent pieces of Perspective, wherein by the help of a Prophetick glass they might see the Son of God fully represented to their view. Besides this, the Prophetical office was a kind of Chancery to the Mosaick Law, wherein the Prophets did interpret the Pandects of the Law *ex aqno & bono*, and frequently shewed in what cases God did dispence wth the outward letter of it, to exalt the more the inward sense and reason of it. Hence the Prophets seem many times to speak contemptibly of the outward prescribed Psa. 50. 8. Ceremonies, when their intent is not to condemn the observat^{81. 16.} ion of them, but to tell the people there were greater things Isa. 1. 11^{13.} which God looked at, then the outward observation of some 66. 3. Ceremonial precepts, and that God would never accept of Ierem. 7. that by way of commutation; for real and internal goodness. 21, 22 23. Hence the Prophets by their own practice, did frequently shew that

1 Kings
18. 38.

V.d. Iaropi
in Deut
18. 11. Et
Vorß. ad
Maim.
de fund.
cap. 9. sect.
5, 6, 7.

that the *Law of Moses* did not so indispensably oblige men, but that *God* would accept of those actions, which were performed without the regularity required by the *Law of Moses*; and thus he did of sacrificing upon high places, not only before the building of the *Temple*, but sometimes after, as he accepted of the sacrifice of *Elijah* on Mount *Carmel*, even when high places were forbidden. Which the Jews are become so sensible of, that they grant that a true Prophet may sometimes command something to be done in violation of the *Law of Moses*, so he doth not draw people to *Idolatry*, nor destroy the obligation of *Moses* his *Law*. But this they restrain to *לפי שעה* something done in case of necessity, and that it should not pass into a precedent or a perpetual *Law*; and therefore their rule is *לפי שעה שומענו לו בכל* The Prophet was to be hearkened to in every thing he commanded in a case of necessity. But by this it is clear that the Prophets were not to be tried by the letter of the *Law of Moses*, but by the end and the reason of it. Thus much I suppose will make it clear what rules the people had to try the Prophets doctrine by, without miracles.

CHAP. VI.

The trial of Prophetical Predictions and Miracles.

The great difficulty of the trying the truth of Prophetical predictions from Jerem. 18. 7, 8, &c. Some general Hypotheses premised for the clearing of it. The first concerns the grounds why predictions are accounted an evidence of divine revelation. Three Consequencies drawn thence. The second, the manner of Gods revelation of his will to the minds of the Prophets. Of the several degrees of Prophecy. The third is, that God did not always reveal the internal purposes of his will unto the true Prophets. The grand Question propounded how it may be known when predictions express Gods decrees, and when only the series of causes. For the first, several Rules laid down. 1. When the prediction is confirmed by a present miracle. 2. When the things foretold exceed the probability of second causes. 3. When confirmed by Gods Oath. 4. When the blessings foretold are purely spiritual. Three Rules for interpreting the Prophecies which respect the state of things under the Gospel. 5. When all circumstances are foretold. 6. When many Prophets in several ages agree in the same predictions. Predictions do not expresse Gods unalterable purposes, when they only contain comminations of judgements, or are predictions of temporal blessings. The case of the Ninivites, Hezekiah, and others opened. Of repentance in God, what it implies. The Jewish objections about predictions of temporal blessings, answered. In what cases miracles were expected from the Prophets, when they were to confirm the truth of their Religion. Instanced in the Prophet at Bethel, Elijah, Elisha, and of Moses himself; Whose divine authority, that it was proved by miracles, is demonstrated against the Modern Jews, and their pretences answered.

THE next thing which the Rules of trial concerned, was the predictions of the Prophets. Concerning which God himself hath laid down this general Rule, Deut. 18. 22.

As

When

When a Prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the Prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt be afraid of him. Grotius understands this place of the Prophets telling the people he would do some miracles to confirm his Doctrine; but, saith he, if those miracles were not done as he said, it was an evident demonstration of a false Prophet. It is certain it was so; for then his own mouth told him he was a lying Prophet; but these words seem to refer rather to something future than present, and are therefore generally understood concerning the truth of predictions, which was a matter of very difficult trial, in regard of the goodness or the Justice of God so frequently interposing between the prediction and the event. That place which makes it so difficult to discern the truth of a prediction by the event, is Jer. 18. 7, 8, 9, 10. *At what instant I shall speak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and destroy it: If that Nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from evil, I will repent of the evil I had thought to do unto them; And at what instant I shall speak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight; that it obey not my voice, then will I repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them.* By which place it seems clear, that even after the predictions of Prophets, God doth reserve a liberty to himself, either to repent of the evil, or the good that was foretold concerning any people; How then can the fidelity of a Prophet be discovered by the event, when God may alter the event, and yet the Prophet be a true Prophet? This being a case very intricate and obscure, will call for the more diligence in the unfolding of it: In order to which, we shall first premise some general Hypotheses, and then come to the particular resolution of it. The general Hypotheses will be concerning the way and method of Gods revealing future contingencies to the Prophets, without which it will be impossible, to resolve the particular emergent cases concerning predictions.

§. 2. *The prediction of future events is no further an argument of a Prophetic spirit, than as the foreknowledge of those things*

is supposed to be out of the reach of any created understanding. And therefore God challengeth this to himself in Scripture, as a peculiar prerogative of his own, to declare the things that are to come, and thereby manifests the Idols of the Gentiles to be no Gods, because they could not shew to their worshippers the things to come, Isaiah 44 6, 7. From this hypothesis, these two Consequences follow.

1. That the events which are foretold, must be such as do exceed the reach of any created intellect; for otherwise it could be no evidence of a Spirit of true Prophecy; so that the foretelling of such events as depend upon a series of natural causes, or such, as though they are out of the reach of humane understanding, yet are not of the Diabolical, or such things as fall out casually true, but by no certain grounds of prediction, can none of them be any argument of a Spirit of Prophecy.

2. That where there were any other evidences, that the Prophet spake by Divine Revelation, there was no reason to wait the fulfilling of every particular Prophecy before he was believed as a Prophet. If so, thn many of Gods chiefest Prophets could not have been believed in their own Generations; because their Prophecies did reach so far beyond them, as Isaiahs concerning Cyrus, the Prophet at Bethel concerning Josiah; and all the Prophecies concerning the captivity and deliverance from it, must not have been believed till fulfilled, that is, not believed at all; for when Prophecies are accomplished, they are no longer the objects of Faith, but of sense. Where then God gives other evidences of Divine inspiration, the credit of the Prophet is not suspended upon the minute accomplishment of every event foretold by him. Now it is evident there may be particular Divine Revelation of other things besides future contingencies, so that if a reason may be given why events once foretold may not come to pass, there can be no reason why the credit of any Prophecy should be invalidated on that account; because every event is not exactly correspondent to the prediction. It is most certain, that what ever comes under Divine knowledge, may be divinely revealed; for the manifestation which is caused by any light, may extend its self to all things to

which that light is extended; but that light which the Prophets saw by was a Divine light, and therefore might equally extend it self to all kind of objects; but because future contingencies are the most remote from humane knowledge, therefore the foretelling of these hath been accounted the greatest evidence of a true Prophet; but yet there may be a knowledge of other things in a lower degree than future contingencies which may immediately depend upon Divine revelation; and these are,

1. Such things which cannot be known by one particular man, but yet are certainly known by other men; as the present knowledge of things done by persons at a remote distance from them: thus *Elisha* knew what *Gebezi* did, when he
^{2 King. 5.} followed *Naaman*, and thus the knowledge of the thoughts of another's heart depends upon immediate Divine revelation,
²⁶
^{2 Cor. 14.} whereas every one may certainly know the thoughts of his
²⁵ own heart; and therefore to some those things may be matters of sense, or evident demonstration, which to another may be a matter of immediate revelation.

2. Such things as relate not to future contingencies, but are matters of faith exceeding the reach of humane apprehension; such things as may be known when revealed, but could never have been found out without immediate revelation; such all the mysteries of our Religion are, the mystery of the Trinity, Incarnation, Hypostatical Union, the death of the Son of God for the pardon of the sins of mankind. Now the immediate revelation of either of these two sorts of objects speaks as much a truly Prophetical spirit as the prediction of future contingencies. So that this must not be looked on as the just and adequate rule to measure a spirit of Prophecy by, because the ground of judging a Prophetical spirit by that, is common with other things without that, seeing other objects are out of the reach of humane understanding as well as future events, and therefore the discovery of them must immediately flow from Divine revelation.

3. The revelation of future events to the understanding of a Prophet, is never the less immediate, although the event may not be correspondent to the prediction. So that if it be manifest that God immediately reveal such future contingencies to
 a Prophet,

a Prophet, he would be nevertheless a true Prophet whether
 those predictions took effect or no. For a true Prophet is
 known by the truth of Divine revelation to the person of the
 Prophet, and not by the success of the thing, which, as is
 laid down in the hypothesis, is no further an evidence of a true
 Prophet, than as it is an argument *a posteriori*, to prove Divine
 revelation by. If then the alteration of events after predictions
 be reconcileable with the truth and faithfulness of God,
 there is no question but it is with the truth of a Prophe-
 tical spirit, the formality of which lyes in immediate reve-
 lation.

The Prophets could not declare any thing more to the people
 than was immediately revealed unto themselves; What was
 presently revealed, so much they knew, and no more, because
 the spirit of Prophecy came upon them *per modum im-*
pressionis transcurrentis, as the Schools speak, and not *per modum*
habitus; the *lumen propheticum* was in them, not as *lumen in*
corpore lucido, but as *lumen in aëre*, and therefore the light
 of revelation in their spirits depended upon the immediate
 irradiations of the Divine Spirit. The Prophets had not
 always a power to Prophecy when they would themselves;
 and thence it is said, when they prophesied, that the Word of the
 Lord came unto them. And therefore the Schools determine
 that a Prophet upon an immediate revelation did not know
omnia prophetabilia (as they speak in their barbarous lan-
 guage) all things which God might reveal; the reason where-
 of Aquinas thus gives; the ground, saith he, of the connexion
 of divers objects together is some common tie or principle which
 joins them together; as charity or prudence is in moral vir-
 tues, and the right understanding of the principles of a science,
 is the ground why all things belonging to that science are un-
 derstood; but now in Divine revelation, that which connects
 the objects of Divine revelation is God himself; now because he
 cannot be fully apprehended by any humane intellect, therefore
 the understanding of a Prophet cannot comprehend all matters
 capable of being revealed, but only such as it pleaseth God
 himself freely to communicate to the Prophets understanding by
 immediate revelation. This is farther evident by all those
 different degrees of illumination and Prophecy which the

§. 3.

2 Hypoth.

2.2 9. 171

Art. 2.--4.

Jews and other writers speak so much of, viz. of *dreams* and *visions*, the *inspirations* of the *Holy Spirit*, the *gradus Moisaicus*, the *external voice*, &c. Now in every one of these degrees the Prophet could go no further than his present revelation extended; and therefore *Aquinas* determines that the understandings of the Prophets were *instrumenta deficientia respectu principalis agentis*, i.e. that in Prophetic illumination the mind of the Prophet was so moved by the Spirit of God, as an instrument in the hand of an Artist, which bears no proportion with the skill of the workman: And therefore the mind of a Prophet is moved, sometimes only to apprehend the thing represented (which they call *instinctus divinus*, of which they say a Prophet may have no certainty whether it comes from God or no) sometimes it is moved so far as to know certainly that this revelation is from God (this they call *lumen Propheticum*) sometimes a Prophet may be moved to speak those things which he fully understands; so it was with most of the true Prophets; but sometimes men may be moved to speak that which they understand not, as is plain in *Caïaphas*, and probable in *Belshazzar*. Sometimes a thing was represented to the fancy of one without any possibility of understanding the meaning of those imaginary species, as in *Pharaohs* and *Nebuchadnezzars* dreams; and to another may be given the true judgment of those motions of fancy without the representation of the things to them, as in *Joseph* and *Daniel*. Now in these and many other different impressions of this Prophetic spirit, the Prophets to whom the things were revealed, could go no further than the degree of the revelation made to them did extend.

6. 4.
Hyp. 3

God did not always reveal to the Prophets the internal counsels and decrees of his own will, but often only the method and series of his providence in the administration of things in the world. Which is the ground of that three-fold distinction of Prophecy in the Schools into *prophetia praedestinationis*, *prophetia prae scientiae*, and *prophetia comminationis*; which is taken off from the ordinary gloss upon *Matth. 1.* where they are thus explained; the Prophecy of Predestination is when the events depends wholly upon Gods will without any re-
spect

As to ours, as the Prophecy of the Incarnation of Christ; the Prophecy of Præscience is of such things as depend upon the liberty of mans will; and the Prophecy of Commination only denotes Gods denunciations of heavy judgements against a people. But Aquinas doth better reduce the two former to one, and so the ground of the difference is to be fetched from the different ways whereby God knows things in the world; which is either as they are in their causes, and so they note the order and series of things in the world, with the mutual respects and dependencies they have one upon another, and this refers to Gods administration of things in the world; or else God looks upon them as they are in themselves; or according to his own positive determinations of them; and now in this sense they are unalterable, but in the other they are not; but God may alter those respects of things when he pleaseth. Now, though this different manner of knowledge can never be conceived separate from one another in the Divine understanding, yet in the revelation made to the mind of a Prophet, they may be disjoyned from each other, because God doth not alwayes reveal things in the highest degree to the Prophets; for no free agent doth alwayes act as far as he can. And therefore Propheticall revelation is sometimes a representation of Gods internal decrees, and then they alwayes take effect, and sometimes only the order of causes and effects, and they may admit of an alteration; and the Prophecy nevertheless be true, because then it referred only to the series or causes in the world, according to which the events would follow, if God himself did not interpose. These things being thus premised, we come to particular resolutions, which must arise from the evidences that may be given when Propheticall predictions did express Gods internal purpose and decree, and when only the order of causes in the world; for in these latter it is apparent, that events might not answer predictions, and yet the Prophet be a true Prophet: which is a matter of greater difficulty, viz. to find out the exact differences of these two, till the event hath made it apparent which came from Gods unalterable purpose, and which not. But though it be a subject little spoken to either by Jewish or Christian Writers, yet we are in hopes there may be some such

such clear notes of distinction discovered between them, *even a priori*, which may sufficiently clear Gods faithfulness, and the Prophecy truth, though the event be not always correspondent to the words of a prediction.

§. 5. I begin then with the evidences that may be given when predictions do flow from internal purpose and decree.

I. Every prediction confirmed by a present miracle, doth not express mostly the order of causes; but the determinations of Gods will, because there can be no sufficient reason given why the order of causes in nature should be altered to express the dependences of things on each other; for herein a miracle would rather tend to weaken than strengthen faith, because the end of the miracle would be to confirm their faith as to events following upon their causes; but now the medium used for that end seems to prove the contrary, viz. that God can alter the series of causes when he pleases himself by working miracles, and therein going contrary to the course of nature; and therefore a miracle seems to be a very incongruous argument in this, because its self is an evidence that may be, which it comes to prove shall not be. But when Prophecies come to declare the internal purposes of the will of God concerning future contingencies, no argument can be more suitable to demonstrate the truth of what is spoken, than the working of a present miracle; for this demonstrates to the senses of men, that however unlikely the event may be to them which is foretold, yet with God all things are possible, and that it is very unlikely God would send such a messenger to declare a falsehood, whom he entrusted so great a power with as that of working miracles. Thus it was in that remarkable Prophecy concerning *Josiah* by the man of God at *Beithel*, 260 years before his birth, which, though it were to come to pass so long after, God confirmed it by a sign, which was the renting of the Altar, and the pouring out of the ashes upon it, and the withering of *Jeroboams* hand. We cannot therefore in reason think that God would set so clear a seal, to any deed which he did intend himself to cancel afterward.

1 King.
13. 3.

2. Predictions express Gods inward purpose when the things foretold do exceed all probabilities of second causes; in which case, those words of *Tertullian* seem very harsh, *Credo quia*

im.

impossible; yet taking that impossibility as relating to second causes, and the ground of faith to be some divine prediction, we see what reason there may be for them: For the more unlikely the thing is to be effected by second causes, the greater evidence is it that the Prophets in foretelling it did not respect the meer order of things in the world, but the unalterable counsels of the will of God, which therefore would certainly have their timely accomplishments. When therefore any Prophets did foretell things above the reach of natural causes, and those things did not come to pass, it was a certain evidence of a false Prophet, as the contrary was of a true one; for none could know so long before-hand such things as were above all humane power, but such to whom God himself, who alone was able to effect them, did reveal and communicate the knowledge of them. And hence we see in Scripture those predictions which have seemed to carry the greatest improbabilities with them, have had the most punctual accomplishments, as the Israelites returning out of Egypt at the end of the 430 years; their deliverance by Cyrus after the captivity in Babylon, which seemed so improbable a thing, that when God speaks of it, he ushers it in with this preface, *that he frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh the diviners mad, but confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers, that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited, &c.* The more unlikely then the thing was to come to passe, the greater evidence there was in so clear a Prophecy of it so long before (above 100 years) and so exact a fulfilling of it afterwards precisely at the expiring of the LXX years from the first Captivity.

Gal. 3 17.

Isa. 44.
35, 26, 28.

Predictions concerning future events, which are confirmed by an oath from God himself, do expresse the immutable determinations of Gods will. For which we have the greatest assurance we can desire from that remarkable expression of the Apostle to the Hebrews, Heb. 6. 17, 18. Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, &c. Wherein the Apostle

§. 6.

3.

obviates and removes all doubts and misprisions, lest God, after the declaring of his will, should alter the events foretold in it; and that he doth, both by shewing that God had made an absolute promise, and withall, to prevent all doubts lest some tacit condition might hinder performance, he tells us that God had annexed his oath to it, which two things were the most undoubted evidences of the immutability of Gods counsel. The word *ἑλπίς*, here used, doth in Scripture often note the frustrating of mens hopes and expectations; so it is used *Habak. 3. 17.* *ἡ ἐλπίς ἐλπίας*, we render it the labour of the Olive shall fail. So *Osea 9. 2.* *ἡ ὁδὸς ἐλπίας αἰνῶς*, and the new wine shall fail in her. Thus the meaning here is, that by two immutable things in which it is impossible that God should frustrate the expectations of men, or alter the events of things after he had declared them. For Gods oath is an evident demonstration of the immutability of his will in all prediCTIONS to which this is annexed, and doth fully include that which the Scripture calls repenting in God, that is, doing otherwise then the words did seem to expresse, because of some tacit conditions understood in them. So we find *Psal. 89 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36.* *If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless my loving kindnesse will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail; my Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holinesse, that I will not lye unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the Sun before me.* Wherein we see what way God takes to assure us of the immutability of his Covenant with his people, by the oath which he adjoyns to his promises; whereby God doth most fully expresse the unalterable determinations of his own will, in that he swears by his own holinesse that he would not lye unto David, i. e. that he would faithfully perform what he had promised to him. And therefore *Tertullian* well saith, *Brati sumus quorum causa Deus jurat, sed miseri & detestabiles sine iuranti quidem credimus.* It is happy for us unbelieving creatures, that God stoops so low as to confirm his Covenant with an oath; but it will be sad and miserable for such as dare

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dare not venture their faith upon it, when God hath annexed his oath unto it. It is thought by expositors, that there is a peculiar emphasis in those words *אָחַר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי* Once have I sworn, thereby noting the irrevocable nature of Gods oath, that there is no need of repetition of it as among men, because when once God swears by himself, it is the highest demonstration that no conditions whatever shall alter his declared purpose. And therefore the Council of Toledo well explains the different nature of Gods Oath and his repentance in Scripture; *Jurare namque Dei, est, à se ordinata nullatenus convellere; poenitere verò, eadem ordinata cum voluerit immutare*; God is said to swear when he binds himself absolutely to performance; and to repent, when things fall out contrary to the declaration of Gods will concerning them; for so it must be understood to be only *mutatio sententia*, and not *confessio*, that the alteration may be only in the things, and not in the eternal purpose of God. But since it is evident in Scripture, that many predictions do imply some tacit conditions, and many declarations of Gods will do not expresse his internal purposes, it seemed necessary in those things which God did declare to be the irrevocable purposes of his will, there should be some peculiar mark and character set upon them for the confirmation of his peoples faith; and this we find to be the annexing an oath to his promises. Thus it is in that grand Instrument of Peace between God and his people, the Covenant of Grace, wherein God was pleased so far to strengthen the faith of his people in it, that he ratifies the articles of peace therein contained, but especially the Act of Grace on his own part with an oath, thereby to assure them it was never his purpose to repeal it, nor to fail of performance in it. For we are not to think that an Oath layes any greater obligation upon God for performance, then the meer declaration of his will; it being a part of immutable justice, and consequently necessarily implied in the Divine nature to perform promises when once made; but Gods Oath respects us and not himself, viz. that it might be a testimony unto us that Gods will thereby declared, is his eternal and unchangeable will, and so the mercies thereby promised are sure mercies; such as are ἀμεταμέλητα without any repentance on Gods part. Isa. 55. 3.

Conc. Tollet.
S. c. 2.

§. 7.
4.

Predictions made by the Prophets concerning blessings merely spiritual, do expresse Gods internal purpose, and therefore must have their certain accomplishment in the time prefixed by the Prophets. The grand reason of this Proposition, is, that the bestowing of blessings merely spiritual, doth immediately flow from the grace and favour of God, and depend not upon conditions on our part, as procuring causes of them; and therefore there can be no account given why God should suspend the performance of such promises, which would not more strongly have held why he should not have made any such promises at all. And therefore when we see that, notwithstanding the highest demerits, God made such free promises, we can have no reason to think that any other demerits interposing between the promises and performance, should hinder the accomplishment of them; unless it be inserted in the promises themselves, which is contrary to the nature of free promises: Upon this ground all the promises relating to the Gospel state, and to the Covenant of grace therein contained, must have their due accomplishment in the time and manner prefixed by the Prophets; and therefore the Jews are miserably blind when they suppose the reason why the promise of the Messiah is yet deferred after so long expectation of him, is, the sins of their people; for this seems to suppose that Gods promise of the Messiah did depend upon their own righteousness and worthiness above all other people, which if it doth, they are like to be the most miserable and desperate people the world hath; and besides, if Gods intuition of sin makes him defer the coming of the Messiah, his foresight of sin would have hindered him from ever promising a Messiah to come; but this was so far from being a hindrance of Gods promise, that the main end of the coming of the Messiah was to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. And we see wherever the Prophets insist on the Covenant of grace, the great promise contained in it is the blotting out of transgressions, and remembering sins no more, and that merely on the account of Gods free love and for his own names sake: This can be no reason then why predictions concerning spiritual blessings should not have their exact accomplishment, because there

can be no bar against *free Love*, and the *bestowing* of such *mercies* which do suppose the greatest *unworthiness* of them, as *Gospel-blessings* do.

The great *difficulty* lyes in *explaining* the *Prophetical phrases* concerning the *Gospel-state*, which seem to intimate a greater *advancement* and *flourishing* of *peace* and *holiness* therein, then hath as yet been *seen* in the *Christian world*; which gives the *Jews* the greater *occasion* to imagine that the *state* so much *spoken* of by the *Prophets*, is not yet *established* in the world. But all the *difficulty* herein ariseth from the want of *consideration* of the *Idiotisms* of the *Prophetical language*, especially where it *respects* the *state of things* under the *Gospel*, concerning which, we may observe these following *rules*.

The *Prophets* under the *Old Testament*, when they *speak* of *things to come* to pass in the *New*, do set them forth by the *representation* of such things as were then in use among themselves; thus the *spiritual worship* of the *Gospel* is *prophecied* of, under the *notion* of the *legal worship* among the *Jews*; the *conversion* of *Egypt* to the *Gospel*, is *foretold* Isa. 19. 19, 21. by the *setting up* of an *Altar*, and *offering sacrifice* to the *Lord*; and the *Conversion* of the *Gentiles* in general, by the *offering up* of *incense*, Malach. 1. 11. and the *service* of *God* under the *Gospel*, is set forth by *going up* to *Jerusalem*; and *keeping the feast of Tabernacles* there, Zach. 14. 16. And the *plentiful effusion* of the *spirit* of *God* in the *miraculous gifts* which attended the *preaching* of the *Gospel*, is set forth by the *Prophet*, Joel 2. 28. by *prophecying*, and *dreaming dreams*, and *seeing visions*; not that these things should really be under *Gospel times*; but that the *Prophets* meaning might be the better *understood* by those he *spoke* unto, he sets forth the great *measure* of *gifts* and *Gospel light* under those things which were accounted as the highest *attainments* among themselves. So the great *measure* and *degree* of *holiness* which was to be under *Gospel times*, is set forth by the *Prophet Zachary*, Zach. 14. 20. by the *placing* of the *motto* which was among the *Jews* only upon the *High Priests* *fore head*, that this should be so common under the *Gospel*, that even the *bells* of the *horses* should bear it, i. e. those things which

seem most remote from a spiritual use, should be devoted to it, as the bells were, which were commonly banged upon their war-horses in those mountainous Countries; and in the latter part of that verse, the height and progresse of Gospel holiness is described under that phrase, *That the pots in the Lords house should be as bowls before the Altar*, i. e. should be advanced from a lower and more ignoble service, to a higher and more spiritual degree of holiness. Now the Jews when they observe these and many other Prophetical passages relating to the time of the *Messias* to run in the old strain of the Law, they presently conclude that the *Messias* must not innovate any thing concerning their way of worship, but only be some great Prince to give them temporal deliverances, and so expound all these texts in a literal sense, which were only expressed in such a strain, the better to help the capacities of those they spake them to.

2. Things absolutely foretold to come to passe in Gospel times in a general manner, are to be understood comparatively in reference to what was before. For when the measure of either grace or knowledge was so far above what was then among the Jews, that there was scarce any proportion between them, the Prophets made use of such expressions to set it forth by, which might raise up the dull apprehension of the Jews to conceive the just measure and fulness of it. Thus when the Prophets fore-tell the grand increase of spiritual knowledge in Gospel times, they do it in this phrase, *they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me from the least to the greatest, Jerem. 31:33.* Where it was far from the Prophets meaning to exclude all use of teaching under the Gospel, (which is contrary to the end of all the Ordinances of the Gospel) but because teaching doth commonly suppose great Ignorance, he sets forth the abundance of knowledge which should be then, by the exclusion of that which doth imply it. So when it is said that *they shall all be taught of God*, the meaning is not, that every one that lives in the Gospel state, should be thus effectually taught by the Spirit of God; but that the number of such under the Gospel, should so far exceed those under the Law, that they could hardly apprehend the

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the disproportion between them, unless it had been set forth in so large an expression. Which leads me to the next rule.

Things fore-told as universally or indefinitely to come to pass under the Gospel, are to be understood as to the duty of all, but, as to the event, only of Gods chosen people. Thus when there is so great peace prophesied to be in Gospel times, that then men should beat their swords into plow-shares, and spears into pruning hooks; that the Wolf should lye down with the Lamb, and Leopard with the Kid; that Nation should not lift up sword against Nation, nor learn war any more; with many others to the same purpose; all these speeches are to be understood of what the nature and design of the Gospel tends to, and what is the duty of all that profess it, and what would effectually be in the Christian world, did all that profess the Christian doctrine, heartily obey the dictates of it; and so far as the Gospel doth prevail upon any, it so far cunctates their wild and unruly natures, that of furious Wolves they become innocent Lambs, and of raging Lyons, tender Kids; so far from hurting and injuring others, that they dare not entertain any thoughts of ill will or revenge towards their greatest enemies. And thus we may see, that notwithstanding the seeming repugnancies of the Prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the state of the New, with the events which have been observed in it, yet that all those predictions which concerned the bestowing of the spiritual blessings which concerned the Gospel state, have had their punctual accomplishment in the sense they were intended.

Predictions concerning future events, where not only the thing in self is foretold but the several circumstances of persons, time, and place, enumerated, are to have their due accomplishment, and consequently expresse Gods inward purposes. For those promises or comminations which are capable of alteration by some tacit conditions implied in them, do most commonly run in general terms; or else are spoken by way of immediate address to the persons concerned in order to the stirring them up the more to the duty God aims at by those comminations; as when Jonas limited the Ninivites destruction to forty days. But when Prophecies are recorded;

nor

not by way of *commination* but meet *prediction*, and particular *circumstances* set down, it stands to reason that such *Prophecies* must have their certain *accomplishment*; and therefore first, because God by setting down the *circumstances* would give them greater *evidences* that the *predictions* came from himself; As when the Prophet at Bethel not only foretold the destruction of the Altar there, but particularly named the man that should do it, viz. *Josias*. So when God by *Isaiah* called *Cyrus* by name, it was doubtless a great confirmation to them, that the deliverance of the Jews should be by that person. Secondly, because these *circumstances* are intended for Landmarks to know the certainty of the accomplishment of the *Prophecy*. For when they find the *circumstances* fall out exactly according to *prediction*, they have no ground to question the accomplishment of the substance of the *Prophecy*. And hence it was that in the grand *Prophecy* of the coming of the *Messias* all particular *circumstances* were so long before foretold. The first dawning of his day being to Adam after his fall, when the Nature he should be born of was foretold, viz. not *Angelical* but *humane*, of the seed of the woman. To *Abraham* it was further revealed of what Nation of mankind, viz. from his posterity; to *Jacob* at what time, when the Scepter should be departed from *Judah*; and from what tribe, viz. *Judah*; to *David* of what Family in that tribe, viz. his own; to *Isaiah* of what Person in that Family, a *Virgin*; to *Micah* in what place, viz. *Bethlehem*; and to *Daniel*, at what precise time, toward the expiring of his seventy weeks; which according to the most probable computation of them did commence from the seventh year of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, and so the 490 years expired near upon our Saviours passion. Now certainly the particular enumeration of all these *circumstances* spoken of so long before, and falling out so exactly, they could not but give the greatest conviction and evidence, that our blessed Saviour was that person so much spoken of by the *Prophets*, in whom all these several lines did meet as in their center.

6.

Lastly, *Predictions* then expresse divine purposes when many *Prophets* in several ages concur in the same *predictions*; because it is hardly seen but all those *sacred conditions* which are supposed

posed in general promises, or comminations may be altered in different ages; but when the conditions alter, and the predictions continue the same, it is a stronger evidence it is some immutable counsel of God which is expressed in those predictions. And in this case one prediction confirms the foregoing: as the Jews say of Prophets; One Prophet that hath the testimony of another Prophet, is supposed to be true; but it must be with this supposition, that the other Prophet was before approved to be a true Prophet. Now both these meet in the Prophecies concerning our Saviour; for to him bear all the Prophets witness; and in their several ages they had several things revealed to them concerning him; and the uniformity and perfect harmony of all these several Prophecies by persons at so great distance from each other, and being of several interests and employments, and in several places, yet all giving light to each other, and exactly meeting at last in the accomplishment, do give us yet a further and clearer evidence that all those several beams came from the same Sun, when all those scattered rays were at last gathered into one body again at the appearance of the Sun of righteousness in the world.

Thus have we now cleared when predictions are expressive of Gods internal purposes; by observation of which rules, we may easily resolve the other part of the difficulty when they only express the series and dependences of things which would have their issue and accomplishment, if God by his immediate hand of Providence did not cut off the chain of effect upon their natural causes. Now as to these Prophecies which concern things considered in themselves, and not precisely as they are in the Counsel of God, we are to observe these Rules;

I. Comminations of judgements to come do not in themselves speak the absolute futurity of the event, but do only declare what the persons to whom they are made are to expect, and what shall certainly come to pass, unless God by his mercy interpose with the threatening and the event. So that comminations do speak only the arbitrium pœna, and the necessary obligation to punishment; but therein God doth not bind up himself as he doth in absolute promises; the reason is, because

comminations confer no right to any, which absolute promises do; and therefore God is not bound to necessary performance of what he threatens. Indeed the guilt, or obligation to punishment is necessary, where the offence hath been committed to which the threatening was annexed; but the execution of that punishment doth still depend upon Gods arbitrary will, and therefore he may suspend or remove it upon serious addresses made to himself in order to it. For since God was pleased not to take the present forfeiture of the first grand transgression, but made such a relaxation of that penal Law, that conditions of pardon were admissible, notwithstanding sentence passed upon the malefactors, there is a strong ground of presumption in humane nature, that Gods forbearance of mankind notwithstanding sin, doth suppose his readiness to pardon offenders upon their repentance; and therefore that all particular threatnings of judgements to come do suppose incorrigibleness in those they are pronounced against: Upon which the foundation of hope is built, that if timely repentance do intervene, God will remove those judgements which are threatened against them.

§. II. And this was certainly the case of the *Ninivites* upon *Jonas* his preaching among them. For when the threatening was so peremptory, *Yet forty dayes and Ninive shall be destroyed*, all the hope they could have of pardon must be from the general persuasions of mens souls of Gods readiness to remove judgements upon repentance. For otherwise there had been no place for any thing but despair, and not the least encouragement to supplicate the mercy of God, which we see they did in a most solemn manner after they were convinced these comminations came from God himself by the mouth of his Prophet. Some think that *Jonas*, together with the threatening of judgement did intermix exhortations to repentance; but we can find no probability at all for that on these two accounts; first, *Jonas* then would not have been so unwilling to have undertaken his message; for, as far as we can see, the baseness of it was the main reason he sought to have avoided it by flying to *Tarsish*. Secondly, *Jonas* would have had no presence at all for his anger and displeasure at Gods pardoning *Ninive*; which is most probably

probably conceived to have been, because the *Ninivites* might now suspect him to be no true Prophet, because he went answered not his prediction. Now there had been no reason at all for this, if he had mixed promises together with his threatenings; for then nothing would have fallen out contrary to his own predictions. And therefore it seems evident, that the message *Jonas* was sent with, was only the commination of their speedy ruine, which God did on purpose to awaken them the sooner, and with the greater earnestness to repentance, when the judgement was denounced in so peremptory a manner; although it seems *Jonas* had before such apprehensions of the merciful nature of God, and his readiness to pardon, that he might suppose Gods intention by this severe denunciation of judgements, might be only to take occasion upon their repentance to shew his goodness and bounty to them. But this was no part of his instructions, which he durst not go beyond in his Preaching, what ever his private opinion might be: for the Prophets were to utter no more in their Preaching, or particular messages than was in their commission, and were not to mix their own words with the Word of the Lord.

And by this we may further understand the denunciation of death to *Hezekiah* by the Prophet *Isaiah*, Set thy house in order, for thou shalt dye and not live. I question not but the Prophet revealed to *Hezekiah* as much as God had revealed to him (for to say, as *Molinus* doth, that the Prophet spake these words of his own head, before he fully understood Gods mind, is very harsh and incongruous) but God might at first discover to *Isaiah* not his internal purpose, but what the nature of the disease would bring him to (unless his own immediate hand of providence interposed) which message he would have *Isaiah* carry to *Hezekiah* for the tryal of his faith, and exciting him to the more lively acts of grace, and for a further demonstration of Gods goodness to him in prolonging his life beyond humane probability, and the course of second causes. Now what repugnancy is there to the truth and faithfulness of God, that God should conceal from his Prophets in their messages the internal purposes of his will, and in order to the doing good to men, should only reveal

what would certainly have come to passe unless himself had otherwise determined it. And thus the repentance which is attributed to God in reference to these denunciations of judgements, is far from importing any real mutation in the internal purposes of God (a rock some have split themselves upon) but it only signifies the outward changing of the Scene towards men, and acting otherwise than the words of the Prophets did seem to import; and all the alteration is in the outward discovery of his will, which is certainly far from being any collusion in God: Unless we must suppose God so bound up, that he hath no liberty of using his own methods for bringing men to repentance, or for trying of his peoples graces, but must in every instance of his Word declare nothing but his own internal purposes, which is contrary to the general method of Gods dealing with the world which is to govern men by his own Laws, and thereby to awaken them to duty, and deterre from sin by his annexed threatnings, without revealing any thing of his internal purposes concerning the state and condition of any particular persons at all; which threatnings of his, though pronounced with the greatest severity, do not speak Gods inward resolutions as to any particular person, but what all must expect if they continue impenitent and incorrigible. For the only condition implied in these threatnings being repentance, it necessarily follows, that where that is wanting, these hypothetical comminations are absolute predictions of what shall certainly come to pass on all those who are destitute of the condition supposed in them.

- §. 13. So that where any comminations are pronounced by any in a Prophesical way concerning any person or people, and no alteration happen at all in them, but they continue impenitent and incorrigible, there the not coming of them to pass may be a token of a false Prophet. For in this case the only tacite condition implied in these threatening Prophecies is supposed to be wanting, and so the comminations must be understood as absolute predictions: Now in those comminations in Scripture, which are absolutely expressed, but conditionally understood, we find something interposing, which we may rationally suppose was the very condition understood. As

Abimelech

Ahimelech's restoring of Sarah, was the ground why the sentence of death after it was denounced, was not executed upon him: So *Ahabs humiliation*, *Hezekiah's earnest prayer*, the *Ninivites repentance*, all interposed between sentence and execution, whereby we may be fully satisfied of the reason why these denunciations did not take effect: But where the persons continue the same after threatenings that they were before, there is no reason why the sentence should be suspended, unless we should suppose it to be a meer effect of the patience and long-suffering of God, leading men to repentance and amendment of life: Which the ground the Jews give, why the not fulfilling of denunciations of judgement was never accounted sufficient to prove a man a false Prophet; to which purpose these words of *Alasmonides* are observable in his *Trisula Torah*, where he treats particularly on the subject of Prophecies. If a Prophet foretell sad things, as the death of any one, or famine, or war, or the like, if these things come not to pass, he shall not be accounted a false Prophet; neither let them say, behold he hath foretold, and it comes not to pass; for our blessed God is slow to anger, and rich in mercy, and repenteth of the evil; and it may be that they repent, and God may spare them, as he did the Ninivites, or defer the punishments, as he did Hezekiah's. Thus we see that Propheticall comminations do not express Gods internal purposes, and therefore the event may not come to pass, and yet the Prophet be a true Prophet.

Gen. 20 7.
1 Kings
21. 19.

De fund.
legis c. 10.
s. 6.

§. 142

2. Predictions concerning temporal blessings, do not always absolutely speak the certainty of the event, but what God is ready to do, if they to whom they are made continue faithful to him: For which we have sufficient ground from that place of *Jeremiah* 18. 9, 10. *At what instant I shall speak concerning a Kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then will I repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them.* So *Isaiah* 1. 19, 20. *If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the Land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.* Whereby we see it evident, that all promises of temporal blessings are not to be taken absolutely, but with the condition of obedi-

Ibid. f. 7. 8.

ence. But this the Jews can by no means digest, whose rule is, that all prophecies of good things to come, must necessarily come to pass; & he was no true Prophet who spake them: For, saith *Maimon*. What ever good thing God hath promised, although it be promised under a condition, he never revokes it; and we never find that God repented him of any good thing promised, but in the destruction of the first Temple, when God had promised to the righteous, they should not dye with the wicked; but it repented him of his words. But it is very plain to any one that considers the Jewish Interpretations of Scripture, that in them they have alwayes an eye to themselves, and will be sure not to understand those Scriptures which seem to shew their own interest, as is most apparent in the present case; for the grand reason why the Jews insist so much on the actual accomplishment of all promises of good to be the sign of a true Prophet, is, to uphold their own interest in those temporal blessings which are prophesied of concerning them in the old Testament; although one would think the want of correspondency in the event in reference to themselves, might make them a little more tender of the honour of those prophecies which they acknowledge to be divine; and have appeared to be so in nothing more than the full accomplishment of all those threatenings which are denounced against them for their disobedience, even by the mouth of *Moses* himself, *Deut.* 28. from the 15. to the end. Can any thing be more plain, and evident, than that the enjoyment of all the privileges conferred upon them, did depend upon the condition of their continuing faithful to Gods Covenant? The only place of Scripture produced by them with any plausibility, is that, *Jer.* 28. 9, The Prophet which prophesieth of Peace, when the word of the Prophet shall come to pass, then shall the Prophet be known that the Lord hath truly sent him. For reconciling of which place with those already mentioned, we are to understand that here was a particular contest between two Prophets, *Hananiah*, and *Jeremiah*; *Jeremiah* he foretold evil to come, though unwillingly, *v.* 6. *Hananiah* he prophesied Peace. Now *Jeremiah*, according to Gods peculiar directions and inspiration, appeals to the event to determine whose Prophecy was the truest: Now, saith *Jeremiah*, if the

Prophecy of Hananiah concerning Peace be fulfilled, then he is the true Prophet, and I the false. And in this case when two Prophets prophesie contrary things, it stands to reason that God will not reveal any thing by the mouth of his own Prophet, which shall not infallibly come to pass, that thereby the truth of his own Prophet may be fully manifested. Besides, Jeremiah refers not meerly to the event foretold, but gives a sudden specimen of his own truth in another Prophecy concerning the death of Hananiah, which was punctually accomplished the same year, *vers.* 17. And, which is most considerable to our purpose, both these Prophets considered the same people under the same circumstances, and with the same conditions; and so Jeremiah, because of their incorrigibleness, foretells desolation certainly to come; notwithstanding this, Hananiah foretells peace and safety, which was contrary directly to Gods method of proceeding, and so the falsity of his Prophecy would infallibly be discovered by the event. So that notwithstanding this instance, it appears evident that predictions of temporal blessings do suppose conditions, and so have not alwayes the event fulfilled, when the people do not perform their condition of obedience. And thus we have now laid down the Rules whereby the truth of Prophecies was to be judged; by which it appears what little need the constant Prophets had to appeal to miracles, to manifest the certainty of Divine revelation in them. So we have finished our first Proposition concerning the manner of trying Divine revelation in the Prophets God sent amongst his people.

We now come to the second general Proposition concerning the Prophets. *Those Prophets whom God did employ upon some extraordinary message for confirming the truth of the Religion established by him, had a power of miracles conferred upon them in order to that end.* So that we must distinguish the ordinary employment of Prophets, which was either instruction, or prediction of future events among Gods own people, from their peculiar messages when they were sent to give evidence to the truth of that way of Religion which was then settled by Gods own appointment. Now the Prophets generally did suppose the truth of their Religion as owned by those they were sent to, and therefore it had been very needless

needless employing a power of miracles among them to convince them of that which they believed already. For we never read among all the revolts of the people of the Jews, that they were lapsed so far as totally to reject the Law of Moses, (which had been to alter the constitution of their Commonwealth) although they did enormously offend against the Precepts of it, and that in those things wherein the honour of God was mainly concerned, as is most plain in their frequent and gross Idolatry: Which we are not so to understand, as though they wholly cast off the worship of the true God, but their superinduced (as the Samaritans did) the worship of Heathen Idols with that of the God of Israel. But when the revolt grew so great and dangerous that it was ready to swallow up the true worship of God, unless some apparent evidence were given of the falsity of those Heathen mixtures, and further confirmation of the truth of the established Religion; it pleased God sometimes to send his Prophets on this peculiar message to the main instruments of this revolt: As is most conspicuous in that dangerous design of Jeroboam, when he out of a Politick end set up his two Calves in opposition to the Temple at Jerusalem; and therein it was the more dangerous in that in all probability he designed not the alteration of the worship itself, but the establishment of it in Dan and Bethel. For his interest lay not in drawing of the people from the worship of God, but from his worship at Jerusalem, which was contrary to his design of Canonizing the Kingdom, and taking the greatest share to himself. Now that God might confirm his people's faith in this dangerous juncture of time he sends a Prophet to Bethel, who by the working of present miracles there, viz. the renting the Altar, and withering of Jeroboam's hand, did manifest to them that these Altars were displeasing to God, and that the true place of worship was at Jerusalem. So in that famous fire-Ordeal for trying the truth of Religion between God and Baal upon mount Carmel by Elijah, God was pleased in a miraculous way to give the most pregnant testimony to the truth of his own worship, by causing a fire to come down from Heaven and consume the sacrifice, by which the Priests of Baal were confounded, and the people confirmed.

1 King. 11.

27.

1 King. 13.

2.

1 King. 18.

38.

Ch. 6. *The Divine Authority of the Scriptures asserted.* 201

firm'd in the belief of the only true God; for presently upon the sight of this miracle the people fall on their faces and say, *The Lord he is God, the Lord he is God.* Whereby we plainly see what clear evidence is given to the truth of that religion which is attested with a power of miracles. Thus the widow of Sarepta which was in the Country of Zidon, was brought to believe Elijah to be a true Prophet by his raising up her son to life. And the woman said to Elijah, *Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the Word of the Lord by thy mouth is truth.* So we see how Naaman was convinced of the true God by his miraculous cure in Jordan by the appointment of Elisha, *Behold now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel.* By which instances it is demonstrable that either the faith of all these persons was built upon weak and insufficient grounds, or that a power of miracles is an evident confirmation of the truth of that religion which is established by them. For this we see was the great end for which God did improve any of his Prophets to work miracles, viz. to be as an evident demonstration of the truth of what was revealed by him. So that this power of miracles is not merely a motive of credibility, or a probable inducement to remove prejudice from the person, as many of our Divines speak; but it doth contain an evident demonstration to common sense of the truth of that religion which is confirmed by them.

And thus we assert it to have been in the case of Moses, the truth of whose message was attested both among the Egyptians and the Israelites by that power of miracles which he had. But herein we have the great Patrons of Moses our greatest enemies, viz. the present Jews; who by reason of their enmity to the doctrine of Christ which was attested by unparalleled miracles, are grown very shy of the argument drawn from thence; In so much that their great Doctor Maimonides layes down this for a confident Maxim *Desfond:* כושח רבינו לא האמינו ראבו ישראל מפני החזקה *The Israelites did not believe in Moses our Master for the sake of the miracles which he wrought.* Did they not? the more shame for them; and if they did, the more shame for this great Rabbi thus to bely them. But the reason he gives for

Alba. l. 1.
cap. 18.

it is, because there may remain some suspicion in ones mind that all miracles may be wrought by a power of Magic or Incantation: Say you so? what, when Moses confounded all the Magicians in Egypt, and made themselves who were the most cunning in these things confess, It was the finger of God, and at last give out as not able to stand before Moses? might one still suspect all this to be done by a Magical power? *Credat Judæus Apella, Non ego.* This is much like what another of their Doctors sayes, whom they call the Divine Philosopher, that *Elisba* his raising the child to life, and curing *Naamans* leprosie; and *Daniels* escaping the Lyons, and *Jonas* out of the Whales belly, might all come to pass by the influence of the stars, or by Pythonsism. Very probable! but it is most true which *Vortius* there observes of the Jews, *nihil non magacissimi mortalium fingunt cogantur agnoscere viriute ac digito quasi ipsius Dei Jesum nostrum effecisse miracula sua.* All their design in this, is only to elevate the miracles of our blessed Saviour, and to derogate all they can from the belief of them. Hence they tell us that nothing is so easie to be done as miracles; the meer recital of the tetragrammaton will work wonders, and that by this *Jeremiah* and our Saviour did all their miracles: It is well yet that he did no more then one of their own Prophets had done before him; but where I wonder do we read that ever the pronouncing of four letters raised one from the dead who had lain four dayes in the grave? or by what power did Christ raise himself from the dead, (which was the greatest miracle of all)? could his dead body pronounce the tetragrammaton to awaken its self with? But *Maimonides* further tells us, that the miracles which Moses wrought among the Israelites were merely for necessity, and not to prove the truth of his Divine commission, for which he instanceth in dividing the red sea, the raining of Manna, and the destruction of Corah and his complices. But setting aside that these two latter were the immediate hand of God and not miracles done by Moses, yet it is evident that the intent of them was to manifest a Divine presence among them; and in the tryal of Corah, Moses appeals to Gods immediate Providence to manifest whether God had immediately employed him

him or no. For it is evident by the *text* that the main charge they laid against *Moses* was *ambition* and *usurpation*; Numb. 16. *Is it a small thing, say they, that thou hast brought us up out of a Land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thy self altogether a Prince over us?* Whereby it is evident they thought that *Moses* acted out of a private design, and aimed at his own honour and authority; which was an imputation of the highest nature that could be alleged against him. Now see how *Moses* proceeds to clear himself, (which is sufficient to stop the mouths of these incredulous Jews) for he lays the greatest evidence of his Divine commission upon a present miracle. And *Moses* said, *Hereby shall ye know that the Lord hath* V. 18, 19. *sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind, If these men dye the common death of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me, &c.* Can any thing be more plain than that the only intent of this miracle was to make it appear that *Moses* took not his office upon him, but was immediately sent and employed by God in what he did. But that which will put an end to this controversy, is, Gods giving *Moses* a power to work miracles for that very end that the Israelites should believe him, Exodus 8. 8, 9. And can we think they would have ever left *Egypt* as they did and followed *Moses* into the wilderness, unless they had been fully convinced he was a deliverer sent from God? It is true (that which the Jews speak so much of) the *stratio in monte Sina* was a great confirmation both to their own faith and to *Moses* his, according to what God had told him, *Exod.* 3. 12, but yet it follows not hence they had no firm bottom for their faith to stand on before (for then they might have been drowned in the red sea as well as the *Egyptians*) but God knowing their incredulity and readinesse to disobey his Law, did at the promulgation of it resist to their eyes and ears his own presence in the midst of them. And this certainly was one of the greatest miracles of all; and therefore to oppose this to the evidence that is produced by miracles, is only to oppose a power of working miracles to a power of doing them. So vain and empty then, so false and fallacious, yea so directly contrary to holy Scripture is that Axiom of

Ex. 19. 9.

the Jews, *Prophetia veritas non confirmatur miraculis*: for miracles are sufficient evidences of Divine revelation, in any whom God imployes to all but such as are resolved not to believe them; and as one well saith, *Pertinacia nullum remedium posuit Deus*; God never works miracles to convince obstinate Atheists and wilful Infidels. This now is the first case wherein miracles are to be expected, which is, when God imployes any upon an extraordinary message, to be as Credentials to confirm their Divine commission.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

The eternity of the Law of *Moses* discussed.

The second case wherein miracles may be expected, when a Divine positive Law is to be repealed, and another way of worship established in stead of it. The possibility in general of a repeal of a Divine Law asserted; the particular case of the Law of Moses disputed against the Jews: the matter of that Law proved, not to be immutably obligatory; because the ceremonial precepts were required not for themselves, but for some further end; that, proved from Maimonides his confession: the precepts of the Ceremonial Law frequently dispensed with while the Law was in force. Of the Passover of Hezekiah, and several other instances. It is not inconsistent with the wisdom of God to repeal such an established Law. Abravanel's arguments answered. Of the perfection of the Law of Moses, compared with the Gospel. Whether God hath ever declared he would never repeal the Law of Moses. Of adding to the precepts. Of the expressions seeming to imply the perpetuity of the Law of Moses. Reasons assigned why those expressions are used, though perpetuity be not implied. The Law of Moses not built upon immutable reason, because many particular precepts were founded upon particular occasions, as the customs of the Zabii; many ceremonial precepts thence deduced out of Maimonides; and because such a state of things was foretold, with which the observation of the Ceremonial Law would be inconsistent. That, largely discovered from the Prophecies of the Old Testament.

INOW come to the second case wherein miracles may be justly expected, which is, when something which hath been before established by Divine Law, is to be repealed, and some other way of worship to be set up in stead of it. Two things are very necessary to be spoken to for the clearing of this proposition; first, Whether a Law once established by God himself be capable of a repeal; Secondly, What necessity there is

§. I.

of miracles to manifest Gods intention of repealing a former Law. These two contain the main foundation of the dispute between the Jews and us, viz, Whether the Law of Moses was ever to be laid aside, and whether the miracles of our blessed Saviour were sufficient evidences of Gods intention by him to repeal the former Law established by Moses? I begin with the first, Whether a Divine Law in general, or the Law of Moses in particular, may be abrogated or repealed, after God himself hath made it evident that the promulgation of it was from himself. This must be confessed the strongest and most plausible plea the present Jews have for their Insidelity; and therefore the eternity of the Law of Moses is made by them one of the fundamental articles of their present Creed, and is pleaded for with the greatest subtilty by their great R. Abravanel, who spends his whole 13. Chapter de capite fidei upon it: but with what success, will be seen in our clearing of it. There are but three things can be supposed as the grounds why a Law once promulged by God himself, should not be capable of repeal; and those are either first, *Because the things themselves commanded in that Law are of such a nature, that they are not capable of being dispensed with:* Or secondly, *That it is not consistent with the wisdom of God to repeal a Law once established:* Or thirdly, *That the reason of the Law continuing alwayes the same, it would argue mutability in God to revoke that Law, and establish another instead of it:* If we can therefore demonstrate, that the matter of the Law of Moses is of a positive and mutable nature, that it is suitable to the wisdom of God to alter it, and that sufficient account in reason may be given for the alteration of it, then there can be no imaginable necessity that a Law once having God for his Author, must therefore derive from him an eternal and immutable obligation.

§. 2.

First then as to the matter of the Law; and here it must be supposed, that in the matter of controversy between us and the Jews, the question is not of any of those things which are therefore commanded, because they are intrinsically good, as the precepts of the natural or moral Law, but of those things which are therefore only good, because God commands them, i.e. things merely positive, whose worth and value ariseth not from

from the *intrinsic weight* of the things, but from the *external impress* of divine authority upon them. Now it is no question on either hand whether God may require these things or no, nor whether these things will be acceptable unto God, so long as he requires them; but whether, when once required, the obligation to them can never cease. Such kind of things among the Jews we suppose all the rites and ceremonies of the Law to be; viz. circumcision, distinction of meats and days, customs of sacrificing, and such like, and whatever other Laws respected them as a distinct and peculiar Common wealth. All these we say are such as do not carry an immutable obligation along with them; and that on these accounts.

First, Because these things are not primarily required for themselves, but in order to some further end. Things that are required upon their own account, carry an indispensable obligation in them to their performance; but where things are commanded not for themselves, but the Legislator doth express some particular grounds of requiring them, there the end and intention of the Legislator is the measure of their obligation. To which purpose Maimonides excellently speaks when he saith, *That the particular manner of worship among the Jews, as sacrifices and oblations, were secundum intentionem secundam Dei, Gods secondary intention and design; but prayer, invocation, and the like, were nearer Gods primary intention*: Now, saith he, for the first, they are no further acceptable to God, then as all the circumstances of time, place, and persons are observed, which are prescribed by God himself; but the latter are acceptable in any person, time, or place. And for this cause, saith he, it is that we find the Prophets often re-proving men for their too great sedulity in bringing oblations, and inculcating this to them, that God did not intend these as the principal instances of his worship, and that God did not need any of these things. So 1 Sam. 15. 22. Behold, to obey is better then sacrifice, and to hearken, then the fat of rams: Isa. 1. 11. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. And especially Jerem. 7. 22, 23. For I spake not to your Fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them forth out of the Land of Egypt, concerning burnt-

1.

More Ne-
voch. p. 3.
6. 32.

burnt-offerings; but this thing I commanded them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people. Of which words Maimonides saith, *Scrupulum moveram omnibus, quos mihi videre aut audire contigit*; For, say they, how can it be that God did not command them concerning sacrifices, when great part of the Law is about them? But Maimonides well resolves the doubt thus, That Gods primary intention, and that which he chiefly looked at was, Obedience; but Gods intention in sacrifices and oblations, was only to teach them the chief thing, which was obedience. This then is of the number of those things which are spoken absolutely, but to be understood comparatively, as, I will have mercy and not sacrifice. My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. It is not you that speak, but the holy Ghost, &c. So that we see all the goodnesse which is in these things; is conveyed into them by that which is morally good, which is obedience; and God did never regard the performance of those Laws any further then as it was an expression of obedience, and it was conjoynd with those other moral duties which were most agreeable to the Divine nature. And in this sense many understood that difficult place, Ezek. 20. 25. And I gave them חקים לא טובים statutes that were not good, i. e. say they, comparatively with these things which were simply and in themselves good; to which purpose they give this rule, *Aliquid negatur inesse alicui, quod alterius comparatione existimatur exiguum*. But I rather think that which the Chaldee Paraphrast suggests, and others explain further, to be the meaning of that place, viz. that by the precepts that were not good, is meant the cruel and tyrannical impositions of those enemies God for their sins did deliver them over to, which were far from being acceptable to them, which is frequently the sense of good in Scripture. Thus we see one reason why the ceremonial precepts do not in themselves imply an immutable obligation, because they are not commanded for themselves, but in order to a further end.

§. 3.

2.

Because God hath frequently dispensed with the ceremonial precepts when they were in greatest force, if the end of them could be attained without them. Thus the precept of Circumcision kept during the Israelites travels in the wilderness.

Thus

Thus David eat of the *shew bread*, which is expressly forbidden in the *Law*; the *Jews* think to evade this by distinguishing between the *bread of confession* in the *Eucharistical offering*, mentioned *Levis. 7. 13.* and the proper *shew-bread*. Now they say, David eat only of the *first*, and not of the *second*; but this is *glossa Aurelianensis*, which overthrows the *Text*; for it is expressly said, that the ground why the *Priest* gave him *holy bread*, was because there was none there but *לחם חסידים* the *shew bread*, 1 *Sam. 21. 6.* A like violation of the *Law* without reproof, is commonly supposed by the *Jews* to have been in the siege of *Jericho*, viz. in the case of the *Sabbath*. But it is more plain in that *Anomalous Passover* observed by *Hezekiah*, which many of the *Jews* themselves acknowledge was not observed as the *second Passover* provided by the *Law* to be celebrated on the 14 day of the *second month* by those who were debarred of the *first* for their *legal uncleanness*; but they suppose it to have been intended for the *legal Passover*; only because the *fourteenth* of *Nisan* was passed before the *sanctification* of the *Temple* was finished, lest they should celebrate none at all that year, they tell us that *Hezekiah* with the consent of the *Rulers*, did make an *Intercalation* that year of a whole month, and so *Nisan* was reckoned for the *second Adar*, and *Yiar* for *Nisan*, from whence they say that *Hezekiah* did intercalate *Nisan* in *Nisan*, that is, added another *Nisan* to the *first*. But where do we read any such thing permitted in the *Law* as the celebrating the *first Passover* the 14 of the *second month*? But granting that it was observed as a *second Passover*, because of the want of *legal sanctification* both in *Priests* and *people*; yet we find great irregularities in the observation of it; for it is expressly said, That a multitude of the people had not cleansed themselves, yet they did eat the *Passover* otherwise than it was written. And yet it is said upon *Hezekiah's* prayer, that the Lord hearkened to *Hezekiah*, and healed every one. So that we see God himself did dispense with the strict ceremonial precepts of the *Law*, where men did look after the main and substantial parts of the worship God required from them. Nay God himself hath expressly declared his own will to dispense with

Exod. 29.
33.

Numb. 9.
11.

2 Chron.
29. 17.

V. Selden.
de Anno ci-
vili Judi-
cap. 9.

2 Chron.
30. 18.

vi. 10.

- the ritual and ceremonial Law, where it comes to stand in competition with such things as have an internal goodness in them, when he saith, *he desired mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings.* Thou
 Hos. 6. 6. we plainly see that the ceremonial Law, however positive it was, did yield as to its obligation, when any thing that was moral, stood in competition with it. And so the Jews themselves suppose an open violation of the judicial Law to have been in the hanging up of Sauls Sons a long time together, directly contrary to Deut. 21. 23. which they conceive to have been from the 16 of Nisan, to the 17 of Marchesvan, which is as much as from our March to September, whereas the Law saith expressly, that the body of one that is hanged, shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day. One of the Jewish Rabbies, as G. Vorstius tells us, is so troubled at this, that he
 Net. in A-brav. c. 13. wisheth that place in Samuel expunged out of Scripture, that the Name of God might be sanctified. But whether this were done על פי הדיבור by the command of the Oracle or no, or whether only by a general permission, we see it was acceptable unto God; for upon that the Gibeonites famine was removed, and God was intreated for the Land. Thus we have now proved, that there is no immutable and indispensable obligation which ariseth from the things themselves.
- §. 4. Secondly, it is no wayes inconsistent with the wisdom of God, to repeal such a Law when once established. The main argument of that learned R. Aoravanel, whereby he would establish the eternity of the Law of Moses, is fetched from hence, That this Law was the result of the wisdom of God, who knows the suitableness of things he appoints to the ends he appoints them for, as God hath appointed bread to be the food of mans body: Now we are not to enquire why God hath appointed bread and no other thing to be the food of man; no more, saith he, are we to enquire why God hath appointed this Law rather than another for the food of our souls; but we are to rest contented with the counsels of God, though we understand not the reasons of them. This is the substance of that argument, which he more largely deduceth. To which we answer, that his argument holds good for obedience to all Gods positive pre-

cept of what kind or nature soever they be, so long as we know their obligation to continue; but all the question is, Whether every positive precept must always continue to oblige. And thus far his *similitude* will hold good; that whatever God doth command, we are to look upon it to be as necessary to our souls, as bread to our bodies; but hence it follows not that our souls must be alwayes held to the same positive precepts, any more than our bodies to the same kind of food. Nay, as in our bodies we find some kind of food alwayes necessary, but the kind of it to alter according to age, health, and constitutions; so we say some kind of Divine revelation is alwayes necessary; but God is graciously pleased to temper it according to the age and growth of his people; so he fed them as with milk in their nonage, with a ritual and ceremonial Law, and trained them up by degrees under the Nursery of the Prophets, till the Church was grown to age, and then God fed it with the strong meat which is contained in Gods revelation of his will by the Gospel of his Son. And therein was abundantly seen Gods πολυποίματος σοφία, his variegated wisdom, that he made choice of such excellent and proportionable ways to his peoples capacity to prepare them gradually for that full and compleat revelation which was reserved for the time of the appearance of the true Messiah in the world. For can any thing be more plain than the gradual progress of Divine revelation from the beginning of the world? That fair resemblance and portraiture of God himself, and his will upon his word (if I may so express it) had its ground-work laid upon mans first Apostacy, in the promise made, Gen. 3. 15. whereon some further lines were drawn in the times of the Patriarchs; but it had its *οὐρανία*, it was shadowed out the most in the typical and ceremonial Law, but was never filled up to the life, nor had its perfect *ζωοποίησις*, till the Son of God himself appeared unto the world. If then it be inconsistent with the wisdom of God to add any thing to the Law of Moses, why not to the revelation made to Adam or the Patriarchs? or especially to the seven precepts of Noah, which they suppose to have been given to a mankind after the flood? If it were not repugnant to the wisdom of God to superadd rituals and ceremonials to mo-

rituals and naturals, why shall it be to take down the *Scalps* of *Ceremonies*, when *God's spiritual Temple*, the *Church* of *God* is come to its full *height*? Is there not more *reason* that *rituals* should give place to *substantials*, than that such should be *superinduced* to *morals*?

§. 52

Pf. 19. 10.

There are only two things can be pleaded by the *Jews*, why it should be more *repugnant* to the *wisdom* of *God* to add to the *Law* of *Moses*, than to any former *revelation*, which are the greater *perfection* they suppose to be in this *revelation* above others, and that *God* in the *promulgation* of it did *express* that he would *never* alter it. But both these are manifestly *defective* and *insufficient* in order to the end for which they are *produced*. For *first*, what evidence is there that the *Law* of *Moses* contained so great *perfection* in it, as that it was not *capable* of having any *additions* made to it by *God* himself? We speak not now of the *perfection* of the *Moral Law*, which it is granted contained in it the *foundation* of all *positive precepts*; for this we never contend for the *abrogation* of, but the *ritual Law* is that we meddle with; and is it *possible* any men should be so *little befriended* by *reason* as to think this to be the *utmost pitch* of what *God* could *reveal* to the *world* as to the *way* of his own *worship*? Let any indifferent *rational person* take the *precepts* of the *Gospel*, and lay them in the *balance* with those of the *Ceremonial Law*, and if he makes any *scruple* of *deciding* on which side the *over-weights* lyes, we may have *cause* to *suspect* him forsaken of that little *reason* which gave him the *name* of *man*. Let but the fifth of *Matthew* be laid against the whole book of *Leviticus*, and then see whether contains the more *excellent precepts*, and more *suitable* to the *Divine nature*? I speak not this to *disparage* any thing which had once *God* for the *Author* of it, but to let us see how far *God* was from the *necessity* of *natural agents* to act to the *height* of his *strength* in that *discovery* of his *Will*. *God* is *wise* as well as *righteous* in all his *ways*; as he can command *nothing* but what was *just*; so he will command *nothing* but what is *good*, nay *excellent* in its *kind*. But though all the *Stars* be in the same *firmament*, yet one *Star* differs from another in *glory*; though they may be all *pearls*, yet some may be more

orient than others are; every place of holy Scripture may have its Crown, but some may have their aureola, a greater excellency, a fuller and larger capacity than the other hath; every parcel of Divine revelation may have some perfection in its kind, yet there may be some monstra perfectionis in Scaligers expression, that may far outvie the glory and excellency of the rest. Can we think the mists and umbrages of the Law could ever cast so glorious a light as the Sun of righteousness himself in his Meridian elevation? As well may we think a dark shady passage more magnificent and glorious than the most Princely Pallace, a picture drawn in Charcoal more exquisite and curious than the lines of Apelles, some imperfect rudiments more exact and accurate than the most elaborate work, as go about to compare the Law of Moses with the Gospel of Jesus Christ in point of excellency and perfection. Let the Jews then boast never so much of their gradus Mosaicus, and how much it exceeded the degree of revelation in other Prophets; we know if his light be compared with what the Gospel communicates, Moses himself saw but as in a glass darkly, and not in speculo lucido, as the Jews are wont to speak. We honour Moses much, but we have learnt to honour him at whose transfiguration he was present more; neither can that be thought any disparagement to him who accounted the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.

But it may be, though the Law in its self be not so absolutely perfect, yet God may have declared he will never alter it, and then it is not consistent with Divine wisdom to repeal it. Very true: God will never alter what he hath said, he will not; but where is it that he hath thus bound up himself? Is it in that noted place to this purpose, *Thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.* So indeed Maimonides argues; but therein more like a Jew than himself; and yet one of his own Nation therein far more ingenuous than he, gives a most sufficient answer to it, which is R. Jos. Albo, whose words are thus produced by Vorstius and others; *The Scripture only admonisheth us, that we should not add to, nor diminish from Gods commands according to our own wills; but what hinders, saith he, but God himself may according to his own wisdom add*

9. 6.

Deut. 12.

32.

De fund.

leg. c. 9. f. 1.

It harim.

l. 3. c. 14.

or diminish what he pleaseth? But are they in good earnest when they say, God bound up himself by this speech? whence came then all the Prophetical revelations among the Jews? did these add nothing to the Law of Moses, which was as much the will of God, when revealed by them, as any thing was revealed by Moses himself? or will they say that all those things were contained for the substance in the Law of Moses, as to what concerned practice? very true; but not in the Ceremonial, but in the Moral Law, and so we shall not stick to grant that the whole duty of man may be reduced to that. But if adding to the precepts be the doing of Gods commands in another way than he hath prescribed, and diminishing from them be merely not to do what God hath commanded, as some conceive, then these words are still more remote from the sense affixed on them by the incredulous Jews. For why may not God himself add to his own Laws, or alter the form of them, although we are always bound directly to follow Gods declared will? May not God enlarge his own will, and bring his Scholars from the rudiments of their nonage to the higher knowledge of those who are full grown? or must the world of necessity do that which the old Roman so much abhorred, *senescere in elementis, wax gray in learning this A, B, C?* or was the Ceremonial Law like the China-Characters, that the world might spend its age in conning of them? But it appears that there was no other meaning in that strict prohibition, than that men should not of their own heads, offer to find out new ways of worship, as Jeroboam; did but that Gods revelation of his own will in all its different degrees, was to be the adequate rule of the way and parts of his own worship. And I would fain know of the Jews, whether their own severe and strict prohibitions of things not at all forbidden in the Law of God, and that on a religious account, as סוין לחורה a boundary to the Law, come not nearer the adding to Gods Law, than Gods own further declaration of his will doth? All the dispute then must be, not whether God may add to his own Law, but whether the Gospel be a prohibited addition to the Law of Moses, that is, whether it be only the invention of men, or it be the express declaration of the will of God? As to which contro-

verse,

verse, he is no true Christian who dare not readily joyn issue with them, and undertake to prove by all the arguments by which they believe the Law of Moses to have been of Divine revelation, that the Gospel of Christ is a clear manifestation of the Will of God. But of that afterwards.

From hence it is evident that God hath not by this place 9. 7. tyed up himself from any further manifestation of his mind beyond the Law of Moses. But it may be they may put greater confidence in those expressions which seem necessarily to imply a perpetual and unalterable obligation in the Law of Moses: For, saith the late learned Rabbi Manasse Ben Conzil in Israel, If by such expressions as those are used in Scripture *Levit. 9. 7.* which seem to import the perpetuity of the Law of Moses, somewhat else should be meant then they seem to express; what did Moses and the Prophets in using them but lay a stumbling block in the wayes of men, whereas they might have spoken clearly and told us, there should a time come when the Ceremonial Law should oblige no longer? This being a charge of so high a nature, must not be dismissed without a particular enquiry into the expressions which are the ground and reason of it. The places most insisted on by the Jews, are *Dent. 29. 29.* Things which are revealed belong to us and to our children *על עמך לעד* for ever. So *Levit. 23. 14.* the precept of offering the first-fruits is there called *עקב לעד* a statute for ever; and that of the Passover, *Exodus 12. 17.* where the same expression is used. From hence they infer that no alteration can happen as to the ceremonial Law since God himself hath declared that it shall continue for ever. To this common argument of the Jews, it is in general replied that the word in which the main force of the argument lyes, doth not carry with it an absolute perpetuity, but it signifies according to the subject it is joyned with. So when it is applyed to God, it signifies eternity, not so much from the meer importance of the word, as from the necessary existence of the Divine nature. Thence Maimonides himself can say, *Proinde sciendum est, quod O lam non necessario significet aternitatem, More Ne- nisi ei conjungatur Ed (V vel Y) idque vel post illud ut vach. p. 2.* *Olam vaud, vel ante Ad Olam.* Although this rule of his c. 28, hath no certainty at all in it, as appears from his collection of

of it, which is because it is said, *Psalm*, 10. 10. *The Lord he is King, O lam vae'd, for ever and ever*: but, as I said already, that it is not from the signification of the word, but the nature of the thing. And it is most plain in Scripture that עולם is so far from implying a necessary perpetuity, that it is applied to such things as can have no long duration, as *Exod.* 21. 6. and he shall serve him עולם that is (as the Jews themselves expound it) to the next Jubilee, though it were near or far off. So *1 Sam.* 1. 22. Where Samuel is said to abide before the Lord עולם for ever, where we find Maimonides his *Ad Olam* in a sense very far short of eternity; this is so plain, that the formerly cited *R. Joseph Albo* doth in terms confess it, and produceth a multitude of other places to the same purpose. For which, though he be sufficiently censured by his Brethren, yet we may see there may be some ingenuity left in a Jewish Rabbi, even in the grand dispute concerning the eternity of the Law of Moses.

§. 8.

All the difficulty now is to assign some rational accounts why such precepts which God did not intend should be always obligatory, yet should be enforced upon them in such expressions which may seem at least to employ a perpetuity. Of which these may be given. First, That these precepts to which these expressions are annexed, should not be looked on as meer ambulatory Laws that did only concern them in their travels thorow the wilderness, and not continue obligatory when they were settled in Canaan. For which purpose we are to observe, that though all the Laws were given in one body in the wilderness, yet the obligation to all of them did not commence at the same time, neither were they to continue for the same duration, these three sorts of precepts may be observed among them; first such as concerned them only in their present condition, as that about the Tabernacle, which was then a moveable Temple among them, suitable to their condition; but when they were settled, God was to have a settled house too. So, that precept of going without the Camp, *Deut.* 23. 12. had an immediate respect to their peregrination. Secondly, such precepts as were given them, but they were not bound to perform them till their settlement in Canaan, as driving out the Canaanites, *Numb.* 33. 52. building

building the Temple in the place which God should choose, erecting judicatories in their several Cities, choosing a King, &c. Thirdly, There were such precepts as concern them wherever they were, whether in the wilderness, or in Canaan; now these are the precepts which are said to be perpetual. This is the account given of it by *H. Grotius*; but because this may be lyable to some exceptions, I therefore add, *De Verit. Rel. Christ. l. 3. s. 7.* Secondly, That the reason of those expressions being annexed to the precepts of the Ceremonial Law, is, because they were to continue obligatory till such a remarkable period of time came which should alter the state of things among them. And such a period of time the coming of the *Messias* is by themselves supposed to be, when in their famous computation they make three *Epocha's*; before the Law, under the Law, and the coming of the *Messias*. And it is evident yet by them, that they do still expect a wonderful alteration of the State of things when the *Messias* comes; doth it not therefore stand to reason that *עולם* should be added to such things which were to continue till so great an alteration as should be on the coming of the *Messias*, especially if the coming of the *Messias* had been deferred so long as they falsely suppose it to be? But however, granting that a new series of times or *αιών* is to commence from the *Messias*, there is very great reason why that expression should be added to those things which were to continue as long as the *αιών* did, i. e. till *Messias* came, which we freely acknowledge. And in this sense is *עולם* often taken for such a duration of things which had some remarkable period to conclude it, as in the case of the *Jubilee* in the servant mentioned, and the special employment which God called *Samuel* to in his case, as to the event, or the end of his life in *Hannah's* designation, when she said he should attend upon the Lord for ever. Thirdly, These precepts are said to endure for ever, which would still have continued obligatory, unless God himself had altered the obligation of them, by a new revelation of his will. For in this case it is most certain that all positive precepts coming immediately from God, do carry with them an unalterable obligation, unless the Legislator himself do in as evident a way repeal them as he did once establish them, that

is, in such *Laws* which depend meerly upon *Gods positive and arbitrary will*. For in this *case* *God* allows none to alter any thing concerning his *Laws*; but *indispensable obedience* is our *duty* till *God* himself repeal his former *Laws*. And this we *assert* to be the *case* in the *Gospel*. So that it appears plainly that it implies nothing inconsistent with the wisdom of *God* to repeal an established positive *Law*, though some expressions to prejudiced minds seem to imply a perpetuity in it.

- §. 9. We come therefore to the third thing which may make a positive *Law* unalterable, which is, when the reason of it is immutable; for then, say they, it would argue mutability in *God* to repeal it. If we can therefore make it evident that the ceremonial *Law* was not established on an immutable reason, and that the reason on which it was established doth suppose a state of things to come, in which it should expire, then there cannot be the least pretence of mutability in *God* on the repeal of such a *Law*. First, That it was not established upon an immutable reason: The immutable reason of a *Law* must either be fetched from the nature of the things commanded, or the grounds of the establishing of it: we have already proved that the nature of the positive precepts of the ceremonial *Law* do not carry in them an intrinsic goodness. And here the Sophistry of the Jews is apparently discovered, that when they are pressed with this, they take sanctuary in the Decalogue, or some spiritual precepts, which comprehend in them the general foundation of the *Law*, as, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*, &c. whereas these are very remote from the matter in controversy, which concerns not what precepts were moral in their *Law*, but what were purely ceremonial; which were so far from being founded on an immutable reason, that the particular occasions of the giving of many of them, is particularly assigned by their own Writers; especially in the main parts of the ceremonial worship of *God* among them, the reasons of which Maimonides saith may be deduced from the customs of the Zabaists, the knowledge of whose opinions and customs, he tells us, is *perita magna ad reddendas praeceptorum causas*, gives much light to the *Law* of *Moses*; and par-

particularly of himself he saith, *quod multarum legum rationes & causa mihi innoverint ex cognitione fidei, rituum, & cultus Zabiorum*; that he came to the right understanding of many of the *Laws of Moses* by his knowledge in the *rites and customs* of these *Zabais*. Granting therefore the hypothesis of this learned Rabbi, that the precepts of the Law had most of them a particular respect to the *Idolatrous customs* of these people; what will hence follow but only this, that the reason of the ceremonial precepts did respect the customs in use when they were given, and so are not founded upon an immutable reason? And the more the precepts are whose reason is to be fetched from hence, the more plain and evident is the thing we intend by it, viz. that the ceremonial Law is not founded upon an unalterable reason.

Now from this one head of the *Idolatrous customs* of those Nations about them, hath that learned Author deduced the reasons of very many of the most obscure commands of the ceremonial Law: As that concerning rounding the corners of their heads, which *Herodotus* tells us was the custom of the *Arabians*, and others of the *Babylonian Priests*; by both which the *Zabii* may be meant, the superstition of the *Zabii* being *Chaldean*, as I have shewed already, and their name, as some conceive, from *Saba* the son of *Chus*, whose posterity were seated in *Arabia*, near to the *red Sea*; and that which confirms this opinion, is, that the *Sabeans* did, as *Philostorgius* saith, worship the *Sun and Moon*, as the *Zabais* did in *Maimonides*; and withall *Bochartus* made it evident from *Strabo*, that some of the *Babylonians* called *Gerrhai*, possessed themselves of the Country of the *Sabeans*, whereby this originally *Chaldaick* superstition might spread its self in these parts near the confines of *Judea*, which might be the cause why all those *rites* which were used by these *Idolatrous* people, are so severely forbidden to the *Jews*: God thereby setting up a wall of separation between his people and the Nations round about them, by making the customs of the *Jews* almost *Antipodes* to theirs; as those of *Japan* are to them of *China*. Upon the same ground it is supposed that other precepts was made against wearing a garment of *linnen and wollen*, because the *Idolatrous Priests* used to go

§. 10.

Lev. 19. 27.

Voss. in
Maim. de
Idol. c. 12.Phaleg. l. 4.
cap. 8.

Lev. 19.

19.

- so clothed, as *Maimonides* tells us out of their books, and likewise that prohibition of a woman wearing the arms of a man, and a man wearing the garments of a woman, is very probably supposed to have had its original from that Idolatrous custom mentioned by the same Author, *ut vir gestet Vistimentum mulicbre coloratum, quando stat coram stella Veneris; similiter ut mulier induat loricaam & arma bellica, quando stat coram stella Martis*; but that Author doth not deny a further reason to be couched in it for the preservation of publick honesty. Many other precepts are drawn from the same fountain by that same Author, as the sowing of divers seeds in the same ground; the forbidding the eating of the fruit of their trees for the first three years after they came to Canaan; that being the furthest time wherein the trees of their own plantation would begin to bear in that Country. Now it was the custom of all those Idolatrous people, that the first time any tree did bear, part of the fruit was to be burnt up in an offering to the Idol, and the other part eaten in the Idol-temple; or else they supposed their trees would never prosper: Now in opposition to this, God bids them bring the fruit of the fourth year to him, and eat of the fifth themselves, that it may yield unto you the increase thereof. So the Idolaters threatned all parents that their children would never live, unless they caused them to passe thorough the fire, from which custom *Maimonides* saith, some even in his time would take the children that were new born, and move them up and down over a fire wherein odoriferous smells were cast: Thence comes that strict prohibition of giving the children to Moloch, which was by that custom of passing thorough the fire. To this same Head, the same Author refers that of not eating the member of a living creature, which we render flesh with the life thereof; which was forbidden, as he elsewhere tells us, not only for avoiding cruelty but because the Heathen Nations were wont in their Idolatrous Feasts to take a member off from a living creature, and eat it afterwards; and in them likewise he supposeth they used the boiling the flesh and the milk together, which, saith he, besides that it affords a most grosse nourishment, savours of their Idolatrous practices too: and therefore, saith he, it is observable that twice where this precept

More Ne-
vob. l. 3.

c. 37.

Deu. 22. 5.

Y. Selden

de Diis Sy-

rius, synt. 2.

cap. 4.

Lev. 19.

19:

Lev. 19.

23.

Lev. 19.

24. 25.

Lev. 20.

2. 3.

Gen. 9. 4.

More Ne-

vob. p. 3.

cap. 48.

cept is mentioned, it follows that of the solemn-appearance of the Males at Jerusalem thrice a year, whereby it seems to be implied, that this action had relation to some great solemnity. These and several other precepts of the Law of Moses are deduced by that very learned Rabbi from Idolatrous customs, as the occasions of them, which seem to have the more reason in them, because that God did in the general so strictly forbid the Jews to walk after the custom of the Nations about them. Thence Origen takes notice of the *το Εσθίου το ρουαν, η τω ιερεως εστ' αμνο* *πολιται*, for which, he saith, they were *σαββατισμοι*, reproached by the Heathens, because their Laws and Polity were so different from the custom of other Nations. Thus we see then that many precepts of the Ceremonial Law were founded, neither on the goodness of the things themselves, nor on any unalterable reason, but were enforced on a peculiar reason on the people of the Jews at that time, as they were a people separated from the rest of the world for the worship of the true God. And for the other great offices wherein their Religion did so much consist, viz. Sacrifices, distinction of meats, observation of Festivals, circumcision, and such like. The particular account and reason of them is either evident in the Law its self, or fully acknowledged by their own Writers, that it is here superfluous to insist on them: Especially since so many have done that so largely already (particularly Grotius) whose Labours I intend not to transcribe.

Exod. 23.
17, 19.
34. 16.

Lev. 10. 23
c. Celsum
l. 4.

De verit.
Rel. Chri-
stiane. l. 3.

I come therefore to the second thing, which is, *That the Ceremonial Law was so far from being founded on an immutable reason, that while it was in its greatest force such a state of things was plainly foresold, with which the observation of that Law would be inconsistent.* For which we are to consider, that though the Law of Moses seemed outwardly to respect the temporal advantages of the people embracing it in the Land of Canaan, yet there was a Spring of Spiritual Promises whose head was higher then Jordan was, that ran down from the Patriarchs, was more and fully opened to some of them; which though it seemed to run under ground in the midst of the Ceremonial obser-
tions

§. II.

- tions of the Law; yet it frequently brake forth and opened its self in the midst of them, and by degrees in the Prophetical Age did make its self a larger Channel, till in the time of the *Messias* by its force and violence it overthrew those banks which stood in the way of it, and overspread the face of the whole earth. It is evident by the whole series of the Scripture of the *Old Testament*, that Gods ultimate intention was not to confine the saving knowledge of his will only to the *Jews*; for the great promise to *Abraham* was,
- Gen. 22.
12. That in his seed all the Nations of the earth should be blessed; And as *Abraham* rejoiced to see that day afar off; so good *Jacob* when he leaned on his *Jacobs* staff, took the height of that *Day Star* from on high, which though like some of the fixed stars, he might not for sometime be visible to the inferiour world; yet he foretold the time when he should descend into a lower orb, and become conspicuous in our horizon. And consequently to his appearance in the world, would be the drawing, not so much the eyes as the hearts of the world to him; for no sooner is it mentioned that *Shiloh* comes when the Scepter departs from *Judah*; but it immediately follows, and to him shall the gathering of the people be. Thus we see before ever the Law of *Moses* came to inclose the people of the *Jews* as Gods peculiar people, there was a design on foot, for enlarging the bounds of Gods inheritance, and making the uttermost parts of the earth his Sons possession. Can we then think that the Law which came afterwards, could disannul the Covenant made 430 years before,
- Gen. 49:
10. as the Apostle excellently reasons? Can we believe the Mosaical dispensation was the utmost of what God did intend, when God had before promised that the blessing of *Abraham* should come upon us Gentiles also? to which purpose it is very observable that *Abraham* was justified not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision; for he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith, being uncircumcised, that he might be the Father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also. Whereby it is evident the the great blessings promised to *Abraham*, did not respect him merely as Progenitor of the *Israelites*, but in a higher capacity,
- Gal. 4.17.
Rom. 4.
10, 11.

city, as *Father of the faithful*; and that the ground of his acceptance with God did not depend on any *Ceremonial Rite*, such as *circumcision* was, God imputing his faith for righteousness before his being circumcised. But because the time was not yet come wherein that grand mystery of mans salvation by the death of the Son of God was to be revealed; therefore when God called the Nation of the Jews from their bondage, he made choice of a more obscure way of representing this mystery to them through all the umbrages of the Law: And withall inforced his precepts with such terrible sanctions of curses to all that continued not in all that was written in that Law to do it, to make them the more apprehensive that the ground of their acceptance with God, could not be the performance of the precepts of that Law, but they ought to breath after that higher dispensation wherein the way and method of mans salvation should be fully revealed when the fulness of time was come. Now therefore God left them under the Tutorage and Pedagogy of the Law, which spake so severely to them, that they might not think this was all God intended in order to the happiness of men, but that he did reserve some greater thing in store to be enjoyed by his people when they were come to age.

So that though the ceremonies of the Law had not a mouth to speak out Christ; yet they had a hand to point to him; for they were the shadow or dark representation of that which was to be drawn afterwards to the greatest life. And this was understood by all those whose hearts were carried beyond the outward, sapless Letter of the Law, to the more inward and spiritual meaning of it (there being an inward & outward in the Law as well as Philosophy) and these mysteries were not so veiled and hidden, but all that were inwardly fully initiated, might fully understand them; which made up that true spiritual Cabala, which was constantly preserved among the true Israelites, which was more largely commented on by the Prophets of succeeding Ages; whose cure it was to unlock this Cabala, and to raise up the hearts of the people in a higher expectation of the great things which were to come. Thence we not only read of the solemn prayer of the Church of the Jews, that the know-
ledge

- ledge of God might be dispersed over all the Nations of the earth, but we have many Prophecies that when the mountain of the Lords house should be exalted, all Nations should flow unto it: that, from the rising of the Sun to the going down thereof, Gods name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense should be offered to his name, and pure offering; for his name shall be great among the Hierher. That the Inscription on the High Priests forehead, Holiness to the Lord, should by reason of the large diffusion of a Spirit of Holiness in the dayes of the Gospel, be set upon the bells of Horses, and that the pots in the Lords house should be as bowls before the Altar, i. e. that when the Levitical service should be laid aside; and that Holiness which was then appropriated to the Priests and Instruments of the Temple, should be discerned in those things which seemed most remote from it. That a Priesthood after another order then that of Aaron should be established, viz. after the order of Melchisedeck; and that he that was the Priest after this order, should be judge among the Heathen, and wound the heads of many Countries; that in the day of his power the people should (not be frighted to obedience with thunderclaps, and earthquakes, as at Mount Sinai) but should come and yield themselves as a free will offering unto him, and yet their number be as great as the drops of the dew which distill in the morning. That God out of other Nations would take unto himself for Priests and for Levites; that the desire of all Nations should speedily come; that the Messenger of the Covenant should come into his Temple; nay that seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon the holy City; that the vision and Prophecy should be sealed up; that the Sacrifice and oblation should be caused to cease; that the City and the sanctuary should be destroyed, and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the War desolations are determined; that after threescore and two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself; that by him transgression should be finished, and reconciliation for iniquity should be made, and everlasting righteousness should be brought in. And, lest all these things should be apprehended to be only a higher advancing of the Levitical worship, and the way
- Psal. 67. 2.
Isa. 2. 2.
Mal. 1. 11.
Zach. 14. 10.
Psal. 110. 4, 5, 6.
Ver. 3.
Isa. 66. 21.
Hag. 2. 7.
Mal. 3. 1.
Dan. 9. 24.
Ez. 26, 27.

of external Ceremonies, God expressly saith, *That he would make a New Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the Covenant that I made with their Fathers, in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the Land of Egypt, which my Covenant they brake, although I was an husband to them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.* Can any one that now considers seriously the State of things thus described as it should come to pass, ever imagine that the *Levitical* service was ever calculated for this State? Was God worship to be confined to his Temple at Jerusalem, when all the Nations of the Earth should come to serve him? Was the High Priest to make an atonement there, when an order of Priesthood different from the *Aaronical* should be set up? Must the Tribe of *Levi* only attend at the Temple when God would take Priests and Levites out of all Nations that serve him? What would become of the magnificence and glory of the Temple, when both City and Sanctuary shall be destroyed, and that must be within few prophetic weeks after the *Messiah* is cut off? And must the Covenant God made with the *Israelites* continue for ever, when God expressly saith, he would make a *New* one, and that not according to the Covenant which he made with them then? It is so evident then, as nothing can well be more, that under the *Old Testament*, such a state of Religion was described and promised, with which the *Levitical* worship would be inconsistent; and so that the *Ceremonial Law* was not at first established upon an immutable reason, which was the thing to be proved.

CHAP. VIII.

General Hypotheses concerning the Truth of the
Doctrines of Christ.

The great prejudice against our Saviour among Jews and Heathens, was the meanness of his appearance. The difference of the miracles at the delivery of the Law and Gospel. Some general Hypotheses to clear the subserviency of miracles to the Doctrine of Christ. 1. That where the truth of a Doctrine depends not on evidence, but authority; the only way to prove the Truth of the Doctrine, is to prove the Testimony of the revealer to be infallible. Things may be true which depend not on evidence of the things. What that is, and on what it depends. The uncertainty of natural knowledge. The existence of God, the foundation of all certainty. The certainty of matters of Faith proved from the same principle. Our knowledge of any thing supposeth something incomprehensible. The certainty of faith as great as that of knowledge, the grounds of it stronger. The consistency of rational evidence with faith. Yet objects of faith exceed reason, the absurdities following the contrary opinion. The uncertainty of that which is called reason. Philosophical disputes no standard of reason. Of Transubstantiation and Ubiquity, &c. why rejected as contrary to reason. The foundation of faith in matters above reason. Which is infallible Testimony. That there are ways to know which is infallible, proved: 2. Hypoth. A Divine Testimony the most infallible. The resolution of faith into Gods veracity as its formal object. 3. Hypoth. A Divine Testimony may be known; though God speak not immediately. Of Inspiration among the Jews and Divination among the Heathens. 4. Hypoth. The evidence of a Divine Testimony must be clear and certain. Of the common motives of faith, and the obligation to faith arising from them. The original of Infidelity.

§. 1.

HAVING now cleared that the Law of Moses was capable of a repeal, I come to the second Enquiry, Whether the
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miracles of our Saviour did give a sufficient evidence of his power and authority to repeat it. I shall not (to prevent too large an excursion) insist on any other evidences of our Saviours being the promised *Messias*, but keep close to the matter of our present debate concerning the evidence which ariseth from such a power of *Miracles* as our Saviour had in order to his establishing that *Doctrine* which he came to publish to the world. The great stumbling block in reference to our blessed Saviour among both the *Jews* and learned *Heathens*, was the meanness of his appearance in the world, not coming attended with that state and magnificence, which they thought to be inseparable from so great a person. The *Jews* had their senses so possessed with the thundrings and lightnings on Mount Sinai, that they could not imagine the structure of their Ceremonial worship could be taken down with less noise and terror than it was erected with. And withall collecting all those passages of the *Old Testament* which seemed to foretell such glorious things of the days of the *Messias*, (which either refer to his second coming, or must be understood in a spiritual sense) they having their minds oppressed with the sense of their present calamities, applyed them wholly to an external greatness, whereby they might be delivered from the Tyranny of the Roman Power. The *Heathens*, as appears by *Celsus* and others, thought it very strange that the Son of God should appear in the world with so little grandeur, and have no greater Train than twelve such obscure persons as the *Apostles* were. For, saith *Celsus*, ὡς αὖτ' ἰν' ἁλὶ πάλαι καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ αὐτὸν δεῖκνυσι, ὅτις ἔχον τιμωρικὰν καὶ οὐκ ἄνδρ' ἰσχυρὸν. *Apud Orig.* τὸ δὲ. As the Sun which enlightens all other things, doth 1. 2. first discover himself; so it was fitting the Son of God should do when he appeared to the world. And so we say he did to all such whole minds were not blinded through obstinacy and wilful ignorance. For although this Sun of righteousness was pleased for the better carrying on his design in the world, to wrap up himself in a cloud, yet his glory could not be confined within it, but did break thorow that dark vail of his humane nature, and did discover its self in a most clear and convincing manner. His appearances indeed were not like those upon Mount Sinai, because his design was not to

amuse men with the glory of his Majesty, and to terrifie them from Idolatry, (which was a great reason of those dreadful phenomena at the delivery of the Law) but he came to draw all men to him by the power and energy of his Grace, and therefore afforded them all rational convictions in order to it. And therefore the quality of our Saviours miracles was considerable as well as the greatness of them: The intent of them all was to do good, and thereby to bring the world off from its sin and folly, to the embracing of that holy doctrine which he came to publish to the world.

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Now that such a power of miracles in our Saviour had the greatest subserviency to the giving full and convincing evidence that he was the person he declared himself to be, and that his doctrine was thereby so clearly attested, that it was nothing but obstinacy, which could withhold assent, will appear by these following Hypotheses which I lay down in order to the proving it.

1 Hypoth.

Where the truth of a doctrine depends not on the evidence of the things themselves, but on the authority of him that reveals it, there the only way to prove the doctrine to be true, is to prove the Testimony of him that revealed it to be infallible. Several things are necessary to be proved for the clearing this proposition.

1. That it is not repugnant to reason that a doctrine should be true which depends not upon the evidence of the thing itself. By evidence of the thing I understand so clear and distinct a perception of it, that every one who hath the use of his rational faculties, cannot but upon the first apprehension of the terms yield a certain assent to it; as that the whole is greater than a part; that if we take away equal things from equal, the remainder must be equal. Now we are to observe, that as to all these common notions of humane nature which carry such evidence with them, the certainty of them lies in the proposition as it is an act of the mind abstracted from the things themselves; for these do not suppose the existence of the things; but whether there be any such things in the world or no as whole or parts, the understanding is assured that the Idea of the whole carries more in its representation than that of a part does. This is the great reason of the certainty and evi-

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dence of *Mathematical truths*, not, as some imagine, because men have no interest, or design in those things, and therefore they never question them; but because they proceed not upon sensible but *abstracted matter*; which is not lyable to so many doubts as the other is; for that a *Triangle* hath three *Angles* no man questions, but whether such *sensible parts of matter* make a *Triangle*, may be very questionable. Now that the truth of *Beings*, or the certainty of existence of things cannot be so certain as *Mathematical demonstrations*, appears from hence: because the manner of conveyance of these things to my mind, cannot be so clear and certain as in pure'y intellectual operations, abstracted from existent matter. For the highest evidences of the existence of things must be either the judgement of sense, or clear and distinct perception of the mind; now proceeding in a meer natural way, there can be no infallible certainty in either of these; For the perception of the mind in reference to the existence of things being caused so much through those *Idea's* or *Phantasms* which are conveyed to the understanding through the impressions of sense, if these may be demonstrated to be fallacious, I may well question the certainty of that which I am certain I have been deceived by; supposing then I should question the truth of every thing which is conveyed in an uncertain way to my mind, I may soon out-go even *Pyrrho* himself in real *Scepticism*. Neither can I conceive how clear and distinct perception of any thing, though not coming through the senses, doth necessarily infer the existence of the thing; for it only implies a non-repugnancy of it to our natural faculties, and consequently the bare possibility of it. For otherwise it were impossible for us to have a clear perception of any thing any longer than it exists; nay than we know it to exist; for existence or non-existence is all one to the understanding, while it is not assured of either. And it is withall evident that things imaginary may clearly affect the mind as well as real; for I may have as real and distinct perception of a *Phoenix* in my mind, as of a *Partridge*; doth it therefore follow that the one is really existent as well as the other? and it will be a very hard matter to assign a certain difference between imagination and pure intellect in such things, which though

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not actually *existent*, yet imply no *repugnancy* at all to the *faculties* of mens *minds*. It is evident then that there cannot be so great *certainty* of the *existence* of things as there may be of *Mathematical demonstrations*.

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And if that principle be supposed as the foundation of all *Physical certainty* as to the *Being* of things, viz. that there is a *God*, who being *infinitely good*, will not suffer the *minds* of men to be *deceived* in those things which they have a clear and distinct *perception* of (without which *supposition* we cannot be assured of the *certainty* of any *operations* of the *mind*, because we cannot know but we were so made, that we might be then most *deceived*, when we thought our *selves* most *sure*) If this principle, I say, be supposed as the foundation of all certain knowledge, then from it I *infer* many things which are very much *advantageous* to our *certainty* in matters of *faith*.

I.

That the foundation of all *certainty* lyes in the *necessary existence* of a *Being*, *absolutely perfect*. So that unless I know that there is a *God*, I cannot be assured that I know anything in a certain manner: and if I know there is a *God*, I must necessarily apprehend him to be *absolutely perfect*, because the grounds of my knowledge that there is a *God*, are from those *absolute perfections* which there are in him; and if I could suppose him not *absolutely perfect*, I must suppose him not to be *God*; for that is necessarily implied in his definition. Now then, if all *certainty* doth suppose the *existence* of a *Being* to be *absolutely perfect*; I must, before I can know any thing *certainly*, conclude that there is an *infinity* of knowledge, wisdom, power and goodness in this *God*; for those are things, which all who understand them, will grant to be *perfections*; and if they be in *God*, they must be *absolute*, i. e. *infinite*. And if they be *infinite*, it necessarily follows that they must transcend our *apprehensions*; so that now we have gained this principle in order to *faith*; that we must grant something to be *unconceivable*, before we can come *certainly* to know any thing. From whence it follows, that those who will not believe any thing to be *true*, because it is above their *apprehensions*, must deny the foundation of all *certainty*, which (as we have proved) doth suppose something to be *infinite*, or above our capacity to comprehend.

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That we have as great certainty of what ever is revealed to us from God, as we can have of the truth of any thing which we most clearly understand. For the truth or knowledge depending on this supposition, that there is a God whose goodness will not suffer us to be deceived in the things we clearly understand; and there is the same foundation for the act of faith as for that of knowledge, viz. That God will not suffer us to be deceived in matters which himself hath revealed to us. Nay, there seems to be far greater on these accounts. First, That there is not so great danger to be deceived in reference to objects of sense, as there is in reference to objects of Divine revelation: because objects of sense make a continual impression upon the Organs of sense; and as to these things, we see the whole world agrees in them so far as they are necessary to life; and withall they bear a greater correspondency to the present state of imperfection which the soul is now in: but now matters of Divine revelation are of a more sublime and spiritual nature, which mens minds on that account are more apt to doubt of, than of things obvious to sense; and withall they call the mind so much off from sense that on these accounts the proneness to doubt is greater, and therefore the foundation of certainty from Gods not suffering us to be deceived, must be stronger. Secondly, There is not so great danger in being deceived as to matters of sense or knowledge, as there is in things of Divine revelation. For we see, granting sense to be deceived, and that we have no certainty at all in natural things, yet affairs of life are managed still; mens outward welfare depends not on the judgement of sense; the Merchant hath never the less gold in his Ship, because his sense deceives him in judging that the earth moves from him, when the Ship moves from it. The Sun doth never the less enlighten the world; though our senses be all of Epicurus his mind; that the Sun is no bigger than he seems to be; but now as to matters of Divine revelation, they are things of the most incontestable right and importance, which depend upon our believing or disbelieving them. And therefore if the goodness of God be such as he will not suffer us to be deceived in our judgement of material and sensible Beings, how much less in reference to the foundation of our certainty as to things

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Divinely revealed. We see then what rational evidence there is not only consistent with, but necessarily implied in the foundation of faith, even as great as in any thing which we do most perfectly know; so that the in-evidence which is so much spoken of as an ingredient of the nature of faith, must not be understood of the foundation whereon the act of faith doth stand, but of the condition of the object, which being a matter of divine revelation, is a thing not obvious to our senses: In which sense the Apostle speaks that faith is

Heb. 11. 1. ἡ ἀποδείξις τῶν πραγμάτων, περὶ ἧς οὐκ ἔστιν ὁρατότης, ἡ περὶ τῶν ἀφανῶν ἐλπίς, the firm expectation of things hoped for, and strong conviction of things which are not seen: In which words, as Erasmus well observes, is contained only an high Encomium of faith, and no Dialectical definition of it, viz. that faith soars above things of sense or present enjoyments; yea, though the object of it be never so remote from either, yet where there is sufficient evidence of Divine Revelation, faith boggles at no difficulties, but is firmly resolved that that God, who hath revealed these things, can and will bring them to pass in his own time. There is not then any such contrariety between the foundation of faith and knowledge, as the Schoolmen have persuaded the world, we see both of them proceed on the same foundation of certainty; all the difference is, faith fixeth on the veracity of God immediately in reference to a Divine Testimony; knowledge proceeds upon it, supposing no Divine revelation, as to the things it doth discover.

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We hence infer, that if the certainty of our knowledge depends on this principle, that God will not suffer us to be deceived; then we are bound to believe whatever God doth reveal to us, though we may not be able to comprehend the nature of the things revealed. For as to these things, we have the same ground of certainty, which we have as to any natural causes; for as to them, we now suppose from the former principle, that, setting aside the existence of God, we could have no certainty of them, but that the formal reason of our certainty is resolved into this, that Gods goodness will not suffer the understanding to be deceived as to these things; the same I say as to spiritual mysteries revealed by God; the ground of our certainty lyes not in the evidence of the things,

but in the *undoubted veracity of God*, who hath revealed them. All that I can imagine possible to be replied to this, is, that *Gods veracity assures us in natural causes that we are not deceived only where we have a clear and distinct perception of the things*; but now in matters above our reason to comprehend, there can be no clear and distinct perception. To this I answer,

First, It is evident in the foundation of all certainty of knowledge, that there may be a clear and distinct perception of that which we cannot comprehend, *v. z. of a being, absolutely perfect*; for if we have not a clear and distinct perception of God, the foundation of all certainty is destroyed, which is the necessary existence of such a being; and he that shall say he cannot have a clear perception of God without comprehending him, doth contradict himself; for if he be a being infinite, he must be incomprehensible; therefore there may be clear perception, where the object its self is above our capacity. Now whatever foundation there is in nature for such a perception without comprehension; that and much more is there in such things as are revealed by God, though above our apprehension: For the Idea of God upon the soul of man cannot be so strong an evidence of the existence of a being above our apprehension, as the revelation of matters of faith is, that we should believe the things so revealed, though our understandings lose themselves in striving to reach the natures of them, and the manner of their existence.

Secondly, That which is the only foundation of a scruple in this case, is a principle most unreasonable in its self, *That we are to embrace nothing for truth, though divinely revealed, but what our reason is able to comprehend, as to the nature of the thing, and the manner of its existence*; on which account the doctrine of the Trinity, Incarnation, Satisfaction, and consequently the whole mystery of the Gospel of Christ must be rejected as incredible, and that on this bare presence, because although many expressions in Scripture seem to import all these things, yet we are bound to interpret them to another sense, because this is incongruous to our reason. But although Christianity be a Religion which comes in the highest way of credibility to the minds of men, although we are not bound to believe any thing but what we have sufficient reason to make it

appear that it is revealed by God, yet that any thing should be questioned whether it be of divine revelation, merely because our reason is to seek, as to the full and adequate conception of it, is a most absurd and unreasonable pretence: And the Assertors of it must run themselves on these unavoidable absurdities.

1. First, of believing nothing either in Nature or Religion to be true, but what they can give a full and satisfactory account of, as to every mode and circumstance of it. Therefore let such persons first try themselves in all the appearances of nature; and then we may suppose they will not believe that the Sun shines, till they have by demonstrative arguments proved the undoubted truth of the Ptolemaick or Copernican hypothesis, that they will never give credit to the flux and reflux of the Sea, till they clearly resolve the doubts which attend the several opinions of it. That there is no such thing as matter in the world, till they can satisfactorily tell us how the parts of it are united; nor that there are any material beings, till they have resolved all the perplexing difficulties about the several affections of them; and that themselves have not so much as a rational soul, till they are bound to satisfy us of the manner of the union of the soul and body together. And if they can expedite all these, and many more difficulties about the most obvious things (about which it is another thing to frame handsome and consistent hypothesis, than to give a certain account of them) then let them be let loose to the matters of divine revelation; as to which yet (if they could perform the other) there were no reason for such an undertaking; for that were
2. Secondly, to commensurate the perfections of God with the narrow capacity of the humane intellect; which is contrary to the natural Idea of God, and to the manner whereby we take up our conceptions of God; for the Idea of God doth suppose incomprehensibility to belong to his nature; and the manner whereby we form our conceptions of God, is by taking away all the imperfections we find in our selves, from the conception we form of a being absolutely perfect, and by adding infinity to all the perfections we find in our own natures. Now this method of proceeding doth necessarily imply a vast distance and disproportion between a finite and infi-

mini understanding. And if the *understanding of God* be *infinite*, why may not he *discover such things* to us, which our *shallow apprehensions* cannot reach unto? what *grand* or *evidence of reason* can we have that an *infinite wisdom* and *understanding*, when it undertakes to *discover matters* of the *highest nature* and *concernment to the world*, should be able to deliver nothing but what comes within the *compass* of our *imperfect and narrow intellects*? And that it should not be sufficient that the *matters revealed* do none of them *contradict* the *prime results* or *common notions* of *mankind* (which none of them do) but that every *particular mode* and *circumstance*, as to the *manner of existence in God*, or the *extent of his omnipotent power*, must pass the *scrutiny* of our *faculties*, before it obtains a *Place* for a *Divine revelation*?

Thirdly, It must follow from this principle, That the pretenders to it must affirm, the rules or maxims which they go by in the judgement of things, are the infallible standard of reason: Else they are as far to seek in the judgment of the truth of things as any others are. They must then, to be consistent with their principle, affirm themselves to be the absolute Masters of reason: Now reason consisting of observations made concerning the natures of all beings (for so it must be considered, as it is a rule of judging, viz. as a System of infallible rules collected from the natures of things) they who pretend to it, must demonstrate these general maxims according to which they judge, to be collected from an universal undoubted history of nature, which lies yet too dark and obscure for any to pretend to the full knowledge of, and would be only a demonstration of the highest arrogance after so many successful endeavours of the most searching wits in any society of persons to usurp it to themselves; especially if such persons are so far from searching into the depths of nature, that they suffer themselves very fairly to be led by the nose by the most dogmatical of all Philosophers; and that in such principles which the more inquisitive world hath now found to be very short, uncertain, and fallacious. And upon severe enquiry we shall find the grand principles which have been taken by these adepts of reason, for almost the standard of it, have been

some Theories which have been taken up meerly from observation of the course of nature by such persons, who scarce ever ed any hand of providence in the world. Now it cannot otherwise be conceived but that these Theories, or principles formed from such a narrow inspection into the nature of things, must make strange work when we come to apply those things to them, which were never looked at in the forming of them : Whence came those two received principles, that nothing can be produced out of nothing ; that there is no possible return from a privation to a habit, but from those Philosophers who believed there was nothing but matter in the world ; or if they did assert the existence of a God, yet supposed him unconcerned in the Government of the world. Whence come our Masters of reason to tell us that the soul cannot subsist after death without the body ? from what Philosophy was this derived ? certainly from that which was very loth to acknowledge the immortality of the soul of man : And any one who strictly observes the close coherence of the principles of the Peripatetick Philosophy, will find very little room left for an eternal-being to interpose its self in the world ; and therefore some have shrewdly observed that Aristotle speaks more favourably of the being of God in his *Exotericks*, then in his *Acroamaticks*, which all that know the reason of the names, will guess at the reason of. I demand then, Must the received principles of Philosophy, and those short imperfect Theories, which were formed more from tradition then experience, by the ancient Greeks, be taken for the standard of reason or no ? If they must, we may soon forsake not only the sublimer mysteries of the Trinity, Divinity of Christ, Resurrection, &c. but we shall soon shake hands with Creation, Providence, if not immortality of souls, and the Being of God himself. If these things be disowned as the standard of reason, let us know what will be substituted in the room of them ? and what Laws our faith must be tryed by ? Are they only Mathematical demonstrations, or the undoubted common notions of humane nature, which whosoever understands assents to them ? Let any of the forementioned mysteries be made appear to contradict these, and we will readily yield up our selves captives to reason : But in the

the mean time, let no jejune unproved hypotheses in Philosophy, be set as Judges over matters of faith, whose only warrant for that office must be *Stat pro ratione voluntas*. Let the principles we proceed by, be first manifested to be collected from a most certain and universal inspection into the nature of all beings, let the manner of process be shewed how they were collected (lest they labour with the common faults of the Chymists, of establishing hypostatical principles from the experiments of some particular bodies, which others do as evidently refuse) and lastly, let it be made appear that these principles, thus collected, will serve indifferently for all beings, spiritual as well as material, infinite as well as finite: and when this Task is exactly performed, we will make room for Reason to sit upon the Bench, and bring the Scriptures as the Prisoner to its Bar.

Fourthly, According to this principle, What certainty can we have as all of any thing we are to believe? who hath fixed the bounds of that which men call reason? how shall we know that thus far it will come, and no further? If no banks be raised against it to keep it in its due channel, we may have cause to fear it may in time overthrow not only the Trinity, Incarnation, Resurrection of the dead, but all other articles of the Creed too? What prescription can be pleaded by one sort of men for Reason more then for another? One will not believe this article of his faith, because against his reason, and why not another reject another article on the same pretence? for whatever the ground of unbelief be, if it be but baptized by the name of reason, it must by this principle pass uncontended; if a sullen Philosopher shall tell us, that the notion of an immaterial substance contradicts his reason as much as the Trinity doth theirs, and that the Universe is nothing else but a Systeme of bodies, by what Artifice will our Master of reason purge away all that black choler that so clouds his mind, that he cannot see the notion of a spirit through it? And such a one will make a hard shift, but he will reconcile his opinion with Scripture too; and therefore why should he be bound up to mens explications of Scripture, when there is no necessity, that he can see, of understanding it in any other way then his own? If another should come

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and tells us, that we must be all *Anthropomorphites*, and that otherwise the *Scripture* were not intelligible; shall not the man put in for reason too? Nay lastly, if another should come and speak out, and tell us *Religion* is but a device of subtle men, that all things come to pass through chance, that the world was made by a fortuitous concurrence of atoms, and that all are fools which are not *Atheists*, and that it is impossible to apprehend the Being of a God, and therefore by the same reason that they reject some mysteries of Religion, he rejects the foundation of all; because an infinite Being is incomprehensible: whither now hath our Reason carried us while we pretend to reject any thing as divinely revealed, merely on that account, that it is above our reason? But it may be replied, On what account then do we reject the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, and the Ubiquity of the body of Christ, as repugnant to reason, if we do not make reason judge in matters of faith? I answer, 1. We reject these opinions not only as repugnant to reason, but as insufficiently proved from Scripture, whereas we here suppose (it not being our present business to prove it) that the several doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation, Resurrection of bodies, &c. are only rejected on that account, that though Scripture seems to speak fair for them, yet it is otherwise to be interpreted, because supposed to be repugnant to reason. 2. Those doctrines before mentioned are eminently serviceable to promote the great end of the Gospel, and are inlaid in the very foundation of it, as that of the Trinity, and Divinity of Christ, but these we now mention are no ways conducive to that end; but seem to thwart and overthrow it, and Transubstantiation establisheth a way of worship contrary to the Gospel. 3. All the foundation of Transubstantiation is laid upon ambiguous places of Scripture, which must of necessity have some Tropes and Figures in them; but the doctrine of the Trinity is not only contained in plain Scripture, but is evidenced by visible appearance, as particularly at the baptism of our Saviour. 4. There is far greater ground why we should reject Transubstantiation and Ubiquity, as inconsistent with reason, than that they should the Trinity, on this account, because the grounds of reason on which we reject those

those opinions, are fetched from those *essential and inseparable properties* of bodies, which are *inconsistent* with those opinions; now these are things within the reach of our *understandings* (in which case God himself sometimes appeals to *reason*) but it is quite another case, when we search into the *incomprehensible nature* of God, and pronounce with confidence, that such things cannot be in God, because we cannot comprehend them; which gives a *sufficient answer* to this objection. The substance then of this discourse is, that whatever doctrine is sufficiently manifested to be of *divine revelation*, is to be embraced and believed, as *undoubtedly true*, though our reason cannot reach to the full apprehension of all the *Modes and circumstances* of it. So that as to these sublime mysteries our faith stands upon this twofold *bottom*. First, *That the Being, Understanding and Power of God doth infinitely transcend ours, and therefore he may reveal to us matters above our reach and capacity.* Secondly, *That whatever God doth reveal is undoubtedly true, though we may not fully understand it;* for this is a most undoubted principle, that God cannot and will not *deceive* any in those things which he reveals to men. Thus our first supposition is cleared, that it is not repugnant to reason, that a doctrine may be true, which depends not on the evidence of the thing in itself.

The second is, *That in matters whose truth depends not on the evidence of the things themselves, infallible testimony is the fullest demonstration of them.* For these things, not being of *Mathematical evidence*, there must be some other way found out for demonstrating the truth of them. And in all those things whose truth depends on *Testimony*, the more creditable the Testimony is, the higher evidence is given to them; but that Testimony which may *deceive*, cannot give so pregnant an evidence as that which cannot; for then all imaginable objections are taken off. This is so clear, that it needs no further proof; and therefore the third follows.

That there are certain ways whereby to know that a Testimony delivered is *infallible*; and that is fully proved by these two Arguments. 1. That it is the duty of all those to whom

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whom it is propounded to believe it; now how could there be a duty in them to believe, which they had no ways to know whether it were a Testimony to be believed, or no? 2. Because God will condemn the world for unbelief: In which the Justice of Gods proceedings doth necessarily suppose that there were sufficient arguments to induce them to believe, which could not be, unless there were some certain way supposed whereby a Testimony may be known to be infallible. These three things now being supposed, viz. that a doctrine may be true which depends not on evidence of reason; that the greatest demonstration of the truth of such a doctrine, is its being delivered by infallible Testimony; and that there are certain ways whereby a Testimony may be known to be infallible: Our first principle is fully confirmed, which was, That where the truth of a doctrine depends not on evidence of reason, but on the authority of him that reveals it, the only way to prove the doctrine to be true, is to prove the Testimony of him that reveals it to be infallible.

§. 8. The next principle or Hypothesis which I lay down, is
 Hyp. 2. That there can be no greater evidence that a Testimony is infallible, than that it is the Testimony of God himself. The truth of this depends upon a common notion of human nature, which is the veracity of God in whatever way he discovers himself to men; and therefore the ultimate resolution of our faith, as to its formal object, must be a'one in to the veracity of God revealing things unto us; for the principium certitudinis, or foundation of all certain assent can be fetched no higher, neither will it stand any lower than the infallible verity of God himself; and the principium patefactionis, or the ground of discovery of spiritual truth to our minds, must be resolved into Divine Testimony, or revelation. These two then not taken asunder, but jointly, God, who cannot lye, hath revealed these things, is the only certain foundation for a divine faith to rest its self upon. But now the particular exercise of a Divine faith lies in a firm assent to such a particular thing as Divinely revealed, and herein lies not so much the Testimony, as the peculiar energy of the Spirit of God in inclining the soul to believe peculiar objects of faith, as of Divine revelation. But the general

general ground of faith, which they call the *formal object*, or the *ratio propter quam credimus* is the general *Infalibility* of a *Divine Testimony*. For in a matter concerning *Divine revelation*, there are two great questions to be resolved, The first is, *Why I believe a Divine Testimony* with a firm assent? The answer to that is, *because I am assured, that what ever God speaks is true*: the other is, *upon what grounds do I believe this to be a Divine Testimony?* the resolution of which, as far as I can understand, must be fetched from those *rational evidences* whereby a *Divine Testimony* must be distinguished from one merely *humane* and *falsible*. For the *Spirit of God* in its workings upon the mind, doth not carry it on by a *brutish impulse*, but draws it by a *spirital discovery* of such strong and *persuasive grounds* to assent to what is revealed, that the mind doth readily give a firm assent to that which it sees such *convincing reason* to believe. Now the strongest reason to believe, is the *manifestation* of a *Divine Testimony*; which the *Spirit of God* so clearly discovers to a true believer, that he not only firmly assents to the general foundation of faith, the *veracity of God*, but to the particular object propounded, as a matter of *Divine revelation*. But this latter question is not here the matter of our discourse; our proposition only concerns the general foundation of faith, which appears to be so *rational and evident*, as no principle in nature can be more. For if the *Testimony* on which I am to rely be only *Gods*, and I be assured from *natural reason*, that his *Testimony* can be no other than *infalible*, wherein doth the certainty of the foundation of faith fall short of that in any *Mathematical demonstration*? Upon which account a *Divine Testimony* hath been regarded with so much *veneration* among all who have owned a *Deity*, although they have been unacquainted with any certain way of *Divine revelation*. And the reason why any rejected such a *Testimony* among the *Heathens*, was either because they believed not a *Deity*, or else that the particular *Testimonies* produced, were meer *frauds* and *impostures*, and therefore no *Divine Testimony*, as it was given out to be. But the principle still remained *indisputable*, that on *supposition* the *Testimony* were what it pretended to be, there was the *greatest*

In frag-
ment. Cicerv.

rest reason to believe it, although it came not in such a way of probation, as their sciences proceeded in. From which principle arose that speech of Tully which he hath translated out of Plato's *Timæus*, *Ac difficillimum factum à Diis omnibus fidem non habere, quanquam nec argumentis nec rationibus certis eorum oratio confirmetur.* By which we see what a presumption there was of Truth, where there was any evidence of a Divine Testimony. And no doubt upon the advantage of this principle it was, the Devil gained so great credit to his oracles; for therein he did the most imitate Divine revelation. From hence then we see what a firm bottom faith in the general stands upon, which is nothing short of an Infallible Divine Testimony: other things may conduce by way of subserviency for the discovery of this, but nothing else can be a sure foundation for a Divine faith, but what is a Testimony of God himself.

§. 9.
Hyp. 3.

A Testimony may be known to be Divine and Infallible, though God himself do not speak in an immediate way. By being known, I do not mean the firm persuasion of a mind enlightened by the Spirit of God, but that there are sufficient evidences *ex parte rei* to convince men of it, which are not wilfully blind and obstinate, i. e. that the ground of unbelief in any cannot be imputed to the defect of sufficient motives to faith, but to their own perverseness and prejudice in not discerning them. Now that God may reveal and declare his mind to the world, not in an immediate way, but by some instruments he may make use of to that end, is not only evident from the great suitableness of such a way to the conditions of the persons he speaks to, but from the general persuasion of the world concerning the possibility of Inspiration. The Jews are so far from denying this, that it is the very foundation of their Religion as well as ours, God discovering the most of his will to them by the Prophets or by persons Divinely inspired. And the general consent of all other Nations, that there is such a principle as Divination in the world, doth make it evident, that it carries no repugnancy at all to natural light, supposing that there is a God, that he should reveal his mind by some particular persons unto the world. For which purpose the Testimony of Tully in the

entrance

entrance of his *Books of Divinations*, is very considerable
Vetus opinio est jam usque ab Heroicis ducta temporibus, eaque
& populi Romani & omnium gentium firmata consensu, ver- L. 1. de
sari quaedam inter homines divinationem, quam Græci Div.
μαντινᾶν appellant, i. e. *prævisionem & scientiam rerum*
futararum; and soon after adds, *gentem quidem nullam*
video, neque tam humanam atque doctam, neque tam immanem
neque barbaram, qua non significari futura, & à quibusdam
intelligi, prædicique posse, censent. He makes it appear to be
 an universal sentiment of all Nations in the world, and in-
 ferseth particularly in the *Assyrians, Egyptians, Cilicians,*
Pisidians, Pamphylians, Grecians, Romans, Etrurians, and
 others. It is true indeed, he after mentions some *Philoso-*
phers who denyed it; but they were most part the followers
 of *Epicurus*, who denyed any providence, and therefore
 might well take away *Divination*; but if *Xenophanes Colo-*
phonius had any followers who asserted the one, and denyed
 the other (as *Tully* seems to intimate, that he was alone in
 that persuasion) yet we may probably suppose the reason of
 their reject^{ing} it, might be the impostures which went under
 the name of *Divination* among them; which are excellent-
 ly discovered by that *Prince of Roman Philosophers* as well
 as *Orators*, in his second *Book of Divination*; but it is appa-
 rent by the same *Author*, that the generality of *Philosophers*
 consented with the people in this persuasion, as the followers
 of those three great sects of *Socrates, Pythagoras,* and
Aristotle, were all approvers of it; but of all persons, the
Stoicks were the most zealous contenders for it, esp^{eci}ally
Chrysippus, Diogenes Babylonius, Antipater and *Possidonius*;
 some indeed reject^{ed} some wayes of *Divination*, yet em-
 braced others, as *Dicaarchus* and *Cratippus*, who reject^{ed} all
 but dreams and extasies; but in the general we find these two
 principles went together among them, the existence of a
Deity, and the certainty of *Divination*; so that from *Divi-*
nation they proved a *Deity*, and from a *Deity* *Divination*.
Sic sunt genera divinandi vera, esse Deos; vicissimque si Di-
vis, esse qui divinent, as *Quintus Cicero* there speaks: and
 at last thus triumphs in the multitude of his witnesses, *An dum*
hæc loquantur expectamus, hominum consentiente auctoritate
ciment non sumus? It may not be amiss to produce the chief

argument on which the *Stoicks* insisted to prove the necessity of *Divination*, supposing the existence of a *Deity*. If there be *Gods*, say they, and they do not reveal to men things to come, it either is, because they do not love them, or because they do not know themselves what shall come to pass, or they think it is of no concernment to men, to know future things, or that it doth not become their Majesty to reveal them, or that they cannot reveal them to men if they would; but neither is it true that they do not love men; for the *Gods* are of a bountiful nature, and friends to mankind; neither can they be ignorant of future things, because they are appointed and decreed by them; neither is it of no concernment to men to know future things; for that makes them more cautious if they know them; neither is it repugnant to their Majesty to reveal them, for nothing is more noble than bounty and doing good; and they must needs know these things; therefore they may make them known to others; and if they do make them known, there must be some way whereby to know that they do so; or else they signify them to no purpose. It now instead of the knowledge of future contingencies, and the multitude of their *Gods*, they had insisted on the discovery and revelation by the true *God* of those ways which may lead men to eternal happiness, that argument had been strong and convincing, which, as it stands, is *Sophistical* and *fallacious*. So that it is very plain, that not only a possibility of *Divination* was acknowledged by those who wanted *Divine* revelation, but that this *Divination* did not arise from meer natural causes, but from an *afflatus Divinus*, and a *concitatio quadam animi*, as they there speak, which imports nothing short of *Divine Inspiration*. Nay, the opinion of this was so common among them, that they thought any extraordinary persons had something of *Divine Enthusiasm* in them, as *Tully* elsewhere tells us, *Nemo vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu Divino unquam fuit*. Although then these *Heathens* were greatly mistaken as to those things they took for a *Divine afflatus* and *Divination*, yet we cannot conceive so general a sense should be imprinted on the minds of men of such a thing as that was, were it not a thing highly consonant to principles of reason, that *God* should communicate his mind to the world by the *Inspiration* of some persons. And therefore I conceive that *Cicero* and his Brother

L. 2. de Nat.
Deorum.

ther *Quintus*, who manage that excellent dispute of Divination between them, have divided the truth between them too. For on the one side *Quintus* evidently proves the possibility of the thing, the consequence of it upon the acknowledgement of a Deity, and the general consent of mankind in the owning of it; and on the other side *Tully* himself excellently layes open the vanity, folly, and uncertainty, not only of the common ways of Divination, but of the Oracles which were in such great esteem among the Heathens. And although *Tully* doth so sharply and sarcastically answer the argument from the common consent of men; *quasi verò quidquam sit, tam valdè, quam nihil sapere, vulgare*; as though nothing men did more generally agree in, than in being fools; yet as it is evident, that the ground of that scoff was from the several manners of Divination then in use; so it cannot be thought to be a general impeachment of humane nature in a thing so consequent upon the Being of a God, which, as himself elsewhere proves, is as clear from reason as from that *Testimonium Gentium in hac una re non dissidentium*, as the Christian *Cicero*, *Lactantius*, speaks, the consent of Nations, which scarce agree in any thing else, but that there is a God. That which we now infer from hence is, that God may make known his mind in a way infallible, though not immediate; for in case of Inspiration of meer men, it is not they so much which speak, as God by them; and in case that God himself should speak through the veil of humane nature, the Testimony must needs be infallible, though the appearance of the Divinity be not visible.

De fals. relig. cap. 2.

Those evidences whereby a Divine Testimony may be known, §. 10. must be such as may not leave mens minds in suspense, but are Hyp. 4. of their own nature convincing proofs of it. For although, as to the event some may doubt, and others disbelieve the Testimony so proved, yet it is sufficient for our purpose, that in the nature of the things (supposing them to be such as we speak of) they are sufficient for the eviſſion, that the Testimony attested by them is divine and infallible. I know it is a great dispute among many, whether those things which are usually called the common motives of faith, do of their own nature only induce a probable persuasion of the truth of the

Doctrine as probable which they are joyned with, or else are they sufficient for the producing a firm assent to the *Doctrine as true*? I grant they are not demonstrative so as to enforce assent; for we see the contrary by the experience of all ages; but that they are not sufficient foundation for an unprejudiced mind to establish a firm assent upon, is a thing not easy to be granted; chiefly upon this account, that an obligation to believe doth lye upon every one to whom these evidences of a *Divine Testimony* are sufficiently discovered. And otherwise, of all sins, the sin of unbelief as to God revealing his mind, were the most excusable and pardonable sin; nay, it would be little less than a part of prudence; because, what can it be accounted but temerity and imprudence in any to believe a *Doctrine as true*, only upon probable inducements? and what can it be but wisdom to withhold assent upon a meer verisimilitude? considering what the *Lyrick Poet* hath already since truly told us,

Pindar.
Od. 1.

ἡ πῦρ τὴν ἀβυστὴν ὁρῶν
κατὰ τὴν ἀληθὴν λόγον
διδοὺς ἀμφοῖς ψεύδεται πικίλοισι
ἐξαπατῶν μύθοι.

That a falsehood may frequently seem truer to common understandings, than truth is self: And, as Menander speaks, τὸ πᾶν ἰσθὲν τὴν ἀληθείαν ἔχει ἐπὶ τοὺς μέγιστον, ἡ πᾶν ὁμιλίαν ὅρα, that a meer verisimilitude may have more force on vulgar minds than truth hath. If therefore there be no evidences given sufficient to carry the minds of men beyond meer probability, what sin can it be in those to disbelieve who cannot be obliged to believe as true, what is only discovered as probable: I cannot therefore see how an obligation to believe a *Divine Testimony* is consistent with their opinion, who make the utmost which any outward evidences can extend to, to be only the bare credibility of the *Doctrine* attested by them. I can very well satisfy my self with the ground and reason why the more subtle wits of the Church of Rome do assert this; for if nothing else can be produced by all motives of faith, but only a probable persuasion of the truth of *Christian Doctrine*,

Doctrine, then here comes in the fairest presence for the *Infallibility* of their *Church*; for otherwise they tell us we can have no foundation for a *Divine faith*; for how can that be a foundation for *Divine faith*, which can reach no higher than a moral inducement, and beget only a probable persuasion of the credibility of the *Doctrine of Christ*? But on what account those who disown the *Infallibility* of the *Church of Rome* in the proposal of matters of faith, should yet consent with those of it in an hypothesis taken up in probability, merely out of subserviency to that most advantageous piece of the mystery of iniquity, is not easie to resolve. Unless the over-soundness of some upon the *Doctrine of the Schools*, more than of the *Gospel*, hath been the occasion of it. For how agreeable can that opinion be to the *Gospel*, which so evidently puts the most defensive weapons into the hands of unbelief? For doubtless in the judgement of any rational person, a meer probable persuasion of the credibility of the *Doctrine of Christ*, where an assent to it as true is required, can never be looked on as an act of faith; for if my assent to the truth of the thing, be according to the strength of the arguments inducing me to believe, and these arguments do only prove a probability of *Divine Testimony*, my assent can be no stronger than to a thing merely probable; [which is, that it may be, or may not be true, which is not properly assent, but a suspending our judgements till some convincing argument be produced on either side. And therefore, according to this opinion those who saw all the miracles which *Christ* did, could not be bound to believe in *Christ*, but only to have a favourable opinion of his Person and *Doctrine* as a thing, which though not evidenced to be true by what he did, yet it was very piously credible; but they must have a care withall of venturing their belief too far, only on such moral inducements as miracles were, for fear they should go farther than the force of the arguments would carry them. Had not this opinion now, think we, been a very probable way to have converted the world upon the Preaching of *Christ* and his Apostles; when *Christ* saith, *Though ye believe not me, believe the works*; Joh. 10. 38. *that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him*; Nay, saith this opinion, than is more that we are bound

H. b. 1. 3, 4

to do, though we see thy works, we are not bound to believe thy Testimony to be Divine, and certainly true; but we will do all we are bound to do; we will entertain a favourable opinion of thy Person and Doctrine, and wait for somewhat else, but we do not well know what, to persuade us to believe. When the Apostles Preach the danger of unbelief, because the Doctrine of the Gospel was confirmed by signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost; what a fair answer doth this opinion put into the mouths of Infidels, that notwithstanding all these signs and wonders, they were never bound to believe the Gospel as a certain Truth, and therefore they hope the danger is not so great in neglecting the Salvation promised by the Gospel.

§. 11.

I cannot conceive that men otherwise learned and sober, should with so much confidence assert that the rational evidences of a Divine Testimony are insufficient to prove a Doctrine true, unless it be from hence, that they find that notwithstanding the strongest evidences many persons continue in unbelief. For, say they, If these arguments were scientific and demonstrative, (as they speak) of the truth of the Doctrine attested by them, then all persons to whom they are propounded, must certainly believe. But this is very easily answered; for we speak not of internal, but outward evidence, not of that in the subject, but of the object, or more fully of the reason of the thing, and not the event in us; for doubtless there may be undoubted truth and evidence in many things which some persons either cannot, or will not understand. If Epicurus should contend still that the Sun and Stars are no bigger than they seem to be, will it hence follow that there can be no rational demonstration of the contrary? Nay, if the way of demonstration be offered him, and Telescopes put into his hands, yet if he be resolved to maintain his credit, and therefore his opinion, and will not use the Telescopes, or suspect still they are intended only to deceive his sight, what possible way will there be of convincing such a person, though the thing be in its self demonstrable? Now if the strength of prejudice, or maintaining of credit can prevail so much in matters of Mathematical evidence to which all assent, what power may we think a corrupt interest may have

upon

upon the understanding, as to the arguments which tend to prove the truth of that Doctrine, which is so repugnant to that carnal Interest which the heart is already devoted to. Our Blessed Saviour hath himself given us so full an account of the original and causes of unbelief in the persons he conversed with, that that may yield us a sufficient answer to this objection. He tells us, the ground of it was not want of light, nay, there was light sufficient to convince any; but that those to whom the light came loved darkness rather than it, because their deeds were evil. That they could not believe while they received honour one of another, and sought not the honour which was of God only, i. e. That they were so greedy of applause from each other, that they would not impartially search into the truth of that Doctrine, which did touch their sores so to the quick, that they had rather have them fester upon them, then go to the trouble of so sharp a cure. That the reason so few followed him was, because the way was narrow and the gate straight which men must go in at; and therefore, no wonder so few of the rich and proud Pharisees could get in at it; they were partly so swayed with a high opinion of themselves, and partly so loaded with their riches, that they thought it was to no purpose for them to think of going in at so straight a gate, while they were resolved to part with neither.

That the final ground of the rejection of any, was not want of evidence to bring them to believe, nor want of readiness in Christ to receive them if they did, but it was a peevish, wilful, obstinate, malicious spirit, that they would not come to Christ, nor believe his Doctrine (for those import the same) but when the most convincing miracles were used, they would rather attribute them to the Prince of Devils, than to the power of God. And though our Saviour presently by rational and demonstrative arguments did prove the contrary to their faces; yet, we see thereby it was a resolution not to be convinced, or yield to the Truth, which was the cause why they did not believe. Now, from this very instance of our Saviour's proceedings with the Pharisees by rational arguments, I demand, Whether these arguments of our Saviour were sufficient foundations for a divine assent

Joh. 3. 19.

Joh. 5. 44.

Mar. 7. 14.

Joh. 5. 40.

Matth. 12. 24.

to that truth, that our Saviour did not his miracles by any Diabolical, but by Divine power, or no? If they were, then it is evident, that rational evidence may be a foundation for Divine faith; or that some motives to believe may be so strong, as to be sufficient evidence of the truth and certainty of the Doctrine: If these arguments were not sufficient proofs of what our Saviour spake, then well fare the Pharisees; it seems they said nothing but what might be thus far justified, that the contrary to it, could not be demonstrated. And, if the evidence of our Saviour's miracles were so great, as some suppose, that the Pharisees could not but be convinced that they were divine; but, out of their malice and envy they uttered this blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, to keep the people from following Christ; then we hence infer two things: First, How strong an evidence there was in the miracles of Christ, when it convinced his most resolute enemies that they were divine. Secondly, What power a corrupt will may have over a convinced understanding: For, although the will may not hinder conviction, yet it may soon fiddle it, by suggesting those things to the mind which may divert it from those convictions of Truth, and seek to find out any ways to disgrace it. It would be no difficult task to discover in all those instances wherein the unbelief of men is discovered in the New Testament, that the persons guilty of it did not proceed like rational men, or such as desired Truth, but were wholly carried away through passion, interest, prejudice, disaffection, or some other cause of that nature, which may give us a sufficient account why those persons did not believe, although there might be clear and undoubted evidence to persuade them to it. But although I assert, that these rational evidences are sufficient arguments of the truth of the doctrine they come to manifest, yet I would not be so understood, that I thereby resolve all Religion into a meer act of reason and knowledge, and that no more power is required in the understanding to believe the Gospel, then to believe a Mathematical demonstration; which is another objection some lay in the way of this opinion; but it is not difficult getting over it. For the sufficiency which I attribute to rational evidence, is not absolute and simple, but, in *no* genere, as an obje-

His evidence. Notwithstanding this, the whole work of the Spirit of God in its peculiar energy and way of operation upon the soul, is left entire to its self: But then, when the Spirit works as to the planting of a truly divine faith, I do not think that it only persuades the soul of the Truth of a Divine Testimony, but withall represents the Truths revealed by that Testimony, with all that excellency and suitableness that there is in them, that by the most agreeable, yet effectual influence of the Spirit upon the soul, it cheerfully embraceth that Truth which is revealed, and cordially yields up its self in obedience to it. This is the Divine faith which the Scripture acquaints us with, and not such a one as merely believes the truth of a Divine Testimony; and as to the production of this faith, I acknowledge meer rational evidence to be insufficient, because they proceed in two very different ways; the one is to satisfy mens minds of the truth of the doctrine, the other is to bring them effectually to adhere unto it. The asserting of the one therefore doth no more tend to destroy the other, then the saying, that a Telescope will help us to discover very much of the heavenly bodies, doth imply that a blind man may see them, if he makes but use of them. Although therefore the natural man cannot savingly apprehend the things of God, yet there may be so much rational evidence going along with Divine revelation, that supposing reason to be pure, and not corrupted and steeped in sense as now it is, it would discover spiritual evidence to be the most real and convincing evidence. Thus far we have proved, that where there is any infallible Testimony, there is sufficient rational evidence going along with it, to make it appear that it is from God.

CHAP. IX.

The rational evidence of the truth of Christian Religion from Miracles.

The possibility of miracles appears from God and Providence; the evidence of Divine Testimony by them. God alone can really alter the course of Nature. The Devils power of working miracles considered. Of Simon Magus, Apollonius. The cures in the Temple of Æsculapius at Rome, &c. God never works miracles, but for some particular end. The particular reasons of the miracles of Christ. The repealing the Law of Moles, which had been sealed by miracles. Why Christ checked the Pharisees for demanding a sign, when himself appeals to his miracles. The power of Christs miracles on many who did not thoroughly believe. Christs miracles made it evident that he was the Messiah, because the predictions were fulfilled in him. Why John Baptist wrought no miracles. Christs miracles necessary for the overthrow of the Devils Kingdom. Of the Damoniacks and Lunaticks in the Gospel, and in the Primitive Church. The power of the name of Christ over them largely proved by several Testimonies. The evidence thence of a Divine power in Christ. Of counterfeit dispossessions. Of miracles wrought among Infidels. Of the future state of the Church. The necessity of the miracles of Christ, as to the propagation of Christian Religion: that proved from the condition of the publishers, and the success of the Doctrine. The Apostles knew the hazard of their employment, before they entered on it. The boldness and resolution of the Apostles notwithstanding this, compared with heathen Philosophers. No motive could carry the Apostles through their employment, but the truth of their Doctrine; not seeking the honour, profit or pleasure of the world. The Apostles evidence of the truth of their doctrine, lay in being eye-witnesses of our Saviours miracles and resurrection. That attested by themselves; their sufficiency thence for preaching the Gospel. Of the nature of the doctrine of the Gospel; contrariety of

is to natural inclinations. Strange success of it, notwithstanding it came not with human power: No Christian Emperor, till the Gospel universally preached. The weakness and simplicity of the Instruments which preached the Gospel. From all which the great evidence of the power of Miracles is proved.

OF all rational evidences which tend to confirm the truth of a Divine Testimony, there can be none greater than a power of working miracles for confirmation that the Testimony which is revealed is infallible. The possibility of a power of miracles cannot be questioned by any who assert a Deity and a Providence, for by the same power that things were either at first produced, or are still conserved (which is equivalent to the other) the course of Nature may be altered, and things caused which are beyond the power of inferior causes: For, though that be an immutable Law of Nature as to Physical beings, that every thing remains in the course and order wherein it was set at the Creation; yet, that only holds till the same power which set it in that order shall otherwise dispose of it; granting then the possibility of miracles, the subject of this Hypothesis is, that a power of miracles is the clearest evidence of a Divine Testimony, which will appear from these following Considerations.

§. I.
Hyp. 3.

God alone can really alter the course of Nature. I speak not of such things which are apt only to raise admiration in us because of our unacquaintedness with the causes of them, or manner of their production, which are thence called Wonders, much less of meer juggles and Impostures, whereby the eyes of men are deceived; but, I speak of such things as are in themselves either contrary to, or above the course of Nature, i. e. that order which is established in the Universe. The Devil no question may, and doth often deceive the World, and may by the subtilty and agility of his nature, perform such things as may amuse the minds of men, and sometimes put show to it, to find a difference between them and real Miracles, if they only make their senses Judges of them. And such kind of wonders, though they are but sparingly done, and with a kind of secrecy (as though they

1.

were consulting with *Cassius* about the burning *Rome*—ye the Devil would have some (especially when Ignorance and Superstition are Ascendents) to keep up his interest in the World. Or else, when he is like to be dispossessed and thrown out of all, he then tries his utmost to keep as many to him as may be; thus, when the Spirit of God appeared in the Miracles of our Saviour and his Apostles and the Primitive Church, he then conjured up all the infernal powers to do something parallel, to keep possession of his Idolatrous Temples, as long as he could. Thus, we find *Simon Magus* dogging the Apostles (as it were) at the heels, that by his Magick he might stagger the faith of people concerning the miracles wrought by the Apostles: after him, *Apollonius* appeared upon the Stage; but, his wonders are such pitifull things, compared with those wrought by Christ or his Apostles, that it could be nothing but malice in *Hierocles* to mention him in competition with Christ. But, those things which seem a great deal more considerable then either of these, were the cure of a blind man by *Vespasian* in *Aegypt*, mentioned by *Tacitus* and *Suetonius*; wherein, there was a palpable imitation of our Saviours curing the blind man in the Gospel; for the man told *Vespasian*, *resistiturum uollos si inspississet*, that he should receive his sight by his spittle; So *Spartianus* tells us of a woman that was cured of her blindness by kissing the knees of the Emperour *Adrian*; and, *Bechornius* hath produced an old Fable in the Temple of *Esculapius* at *Rome* of several diseased persons that were cured there. A blind man in the time of *Antoninus* was cured by the Oracle; he must come to the Altar, and kneel there; from the right side he must turn to the left, and put five fingers upon the Altar, and then lift up his hands and touch his eyes, and he was cured. Another called *Lucius* cured of the pain of his side, by mixing the ashes of the Altar with the Wine, and applying it to his side; Another cured of spitting of blood by the kernel of a Pine-apple, and Honey used three dayes; A fourth cured of blindness by the blood of a white Cock and Honey, used three dayes upon his eyes. These are the most considerable of all the pretended miracles done about that time, when the noise of the Christian miracles was spread so far, and done so frequently,

Sueton.
Vesp.c.7.

Quest.
Rom.9.7.

quently, that they challenged the Heathens again and again to bring forth any person possessed with a Devil; if he did not confess to them that he was a Devil, though he made the Heathens believe that he was a God, they were contented to leave their blood in the place.

For thus Tertullian speaks in his *Apology* to them: *Eda. Apol. cap.*
tur hic aliquis sub tribunalibus vestris, quem Damone agi ^{23.}
constet: jussus à quolibet Christiano loqui spiritus ille, tam
si Demonem confitebitur de vero, quam alibi Deum de falso:
aque producatur aliquis ex iis qui de Deo pati existimantur,
quiaris inhalantes numen de nidore concipiunt, qui ructando
curantur, qui anhelando præsantur. Ista ipsa virgo cælestis
pluviarum pollicitatrix, iste ipse Esculapius Medicinarum
demonstrator, alijs de morituris scordis & dehatii & Ascla-
piadosi subministrator, nisi se Demones confessi fuerint, Chri-
stiano mentiri non audentes, ibidem illius Christiani proca-
cissini sanguinem fundite. Quid isto opere manifestius, quid
hic probatione fidelius? simplicitas veritatis in medio est, vir-
tutilli sua assistit, nihil suspicari licebit, magia aut aliqua
fallacia fieri. Dictis non stetit, si oculi vestri & aures per-
miserint vobis. In these very daring words, we see how
the Christians appealed to their senses, even with the hazard
of their own lives, that they would make even Esculapi-
us himself confess what he was, and by whose power all the
cures were wrought upon the dreamers in his Temples. And,
for the manner of the Devils cures, the same Author ex-
plains it thus, Ladunt primò, dehinc remedia præcipiunt ad *Apol. c. 22.*
miraculum nova, siue contraria, post qua desinunt ladere &
curasse creduntur. They first possess the bodies themselves (as
Demoniacks were common in those times) and affect it with
various distempers, afterwards upon using the strange reme-
dis prescribed by Esculapius, they forsake their station,
and the person is cured. And, for the cures performed by
the Emperours, those who consider what various artifices
were about that time used to procure an opinion of Divinity
in the Emperours, will not much wonder that such reports
should be spread of them, or that any persons should fain
these distempers to give themselves out to be cured by them.
But granting somewhat wonderful in these, what are they,
compared

compared with those done by *Christians*? and whoever would lay down his life to attest any of them? So, that though the Devil by his subtilty may easily impose upon *Spectators* eyes, yet it was impossible for him by any power of his own to alter the course of *Nature*, or produce any real miracle. For every true miracle is a production of something out of nothing (which cannot be done by less than an omnipotent arm) and that either in the thing it self, or the manner of producing it. In the thing it self, when it is of that nature that it cannot be produced by any second causes, as the raising of the dead; in the manner of doing it, when though the thing lyes within the possibility of second causes, yet it is performed without the help of any of them, as in the cure of diseases without any use of means, by a word speaking, the touch of a garment, &c. Now, that all those miracles which were wrought in confirmation of the *Christian doctrine* were such true and proper miracles, will be discovered afterwards.

- §. 2. God never alters the course of *Nature*, but for some very considerable end. For otherwise when he did it, it would not be taken notice of, nor thought to be an alteration of the order of *Nature*, but only some rare contingencies which lye hid in the order of causes, but only break out at some times: of which sort are all those things which the ignorant world is apt to account as *Prodigies*. Of all which rare contingencies in *Nature*, I say, as the Roman Orator doth, *Si, quod raro fit, id portentum putandum est, sapientem isti portentum est; sapius enim mulum sepeisse arbitror, quam sapientem fuisse.* If all rare contingencies be accounted prodigies, a Wise man is certainly the greatest prodigy. But, these are quite of another nature from true miracles, which are immediately produced by a *Divine power*, and intended for a confirmation of some *Divine Testimony*. There are now several weighty reasons which might make miracles necessary in the time of our Saviour, as an evidence of his *Divine Authority* and power.

Cicero de
Div. l. 2.

That he came to take down that way of worship which had been at first settled by a power of miracles in *Moses*. God would not be so much wanting to the faith of that people which

which had received their *Law* by *signs* and *wonders* from *heaven*, but that there should be as *strong* an *evidence* given to them, that the *fulness* of *time* was *come* when that *dispensation* was to have an *end*, and to give *place* to one more perfect, which was to be *established* instead of it. Upon which account the *Jews* might *rationally* enquire after a *sign* where any *new revelation* was discovered, which might null the *obligation* of any former *Law*: And when they enquire so much after a *sign*, our *Saviour* doth not reject the enquiry as in its self *unreasonable*, but as made in an *unreasonable* manner; for they would not be contented with the *miracles* which our *Saviour* wrought, which sufficiently manifested a *Divine power*; but all that they desired was a *sign* from *heaven*, i.e. such as were done at the giving of the *Law*, the *thundering* and *lightenings* there, or as the *raining* of *Manna* in the *wilderness*; now our *Saviour* justly checks this demand as *importune* and *impudent*; partly as knowing upon what account they asked it, *merely* to tempt him, and not out of any *real desire* of *satisfaction*; and partly because of that *abundant evidence* which was given in the *miraculous curas* which were wrought by him, which were more *suited* to that *design* of doing good in the world, then all the *Thunderclaps* on *Mount Sinai* were; neither were the people in a *condition* to be fed by *Manna* as they were in the *wilderness*, *God* graciously suiting the *discoveries* of his power to the *peculiar advantages* of the people which they were made to, and the *dispensation* they ushered in. Those terrible *signs* at *Mount Sinai* being very *suited* to the *severity* and *rigour* of the *Law*; and the *gracious miracles* of our *Saviour*, to the *sweetness* and *grace* of the *Gospel*. And on this account our *Saviour* charged the *Jews* with *hypocrisy* in requiring a *sign* as something above *sinews*, a *prodigy* rather than a *miracle*; An *evil* and *adulterous* generation seeketh after a *sign*, and there shall no *sign* be given it but that of the *Prophet Jonas*, i.e. this people which are so far from the *faith* of *Abraham*, (and therefore are *suppositious Children*) that no *miracles* which I do, will convince them, but they seek only to have their *humours* gratified more then their *faith* confirmed by some *prodigy*

Matth. 12.
38. 16. 1.

Matth. 12.
39.

from heaven, shall not by me be thus gratified; but having done enough already to persuade them, if they had any hearts to believe, instead of a sign from heaven they shall have only one from the earth, and that not so much intended for the conversion of such wilfull unbelievers, as for the testifying my Innocency to the world, viz. his resurrection from the dead. And so elsewhere when the Jews demand a sign, it was upon the doing of that, which if they had attended to, had been a sufficient sign to them, viz. his driving the buyers and sellers out of the Temple. Which being a thing permitted by the Sanhedrim and the Priests, how could they think so mean a person, in appearance, as our Saviour was, could ever have effected it, had it not been for a Divine Majesty and power which appeared in him. It was not then the expectation of miracles which our Saviour rebuked in the Jews, but being unsatisfied with the kind and nature of our Saviours miracles. It was their hypocrisie and unbelief which Christ condemned, notwithstanding the frequent miracles which he wrought among them: For we plainly find our Saviour very often appealing to his miracles as the evidences of his Divine Commission: If I had not done the works among them, which no man else did, they had not had faith, i. e. in not believing me. Whereby Christ both sets forth the necessity of his working miracles in order to the conviction of the world, and the greatness of the miracles which he wrought; he did those no man else had done, no not Moses and Elias, in curing all manner of diseases by the word of his mouth; and those miracles which they had done, he exceeded them in the manner of doing them. Moses fed them with bread from heaven, but Christ multiplied on earth some few loaves and fishes, to the feeding of many thousands: Elias indeed raised one from the dead; but Christ raised more, and one after he had been four dayes in the grave. And upon this very evidence of our Saviours miracles we find many believing on him. And even of those who were not so far wrought upon as to become followers of Christ, as the only Messiah; yet we find them so far persuaded by the power of his miracles, that they looked upon him as a great Prophet, or one that was sent from God: So Nicodemus, who

Joh. 2. 18.

Joh. 5. 36.

10. 25.

Joh. 15. 24

Joh. 1. 49.

2. 11.

who came first to Christ more as a rational enquirer than a believer, yet we see he was persuaded that he was a teacher come from God, because no man could do Joh. 3.2. the miracles which Christ did, unless God were with him. And before him many of the Jews at Jerusalem believed in his Joh. 2.23. name when they saw the miracles which he did; yet these persons Christ would not trust himself with, because he knew their hearts were not subdued to his doctrine, though their understandings were convinced by his miracles. And after this, others of the Jews that looked not on him as the Messiah, yet it is said they believed on him on the account of his miracles. And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done? Although herein they were most unreasonable in believing the evidence; and not the truth attested by it; in believing Christ to be one sent from God by his miracles, and yet not believing him to be the Messiah, which was the thing attested by them. Not that meer miracles would prove the person to be the Messiah who did them, but the miracles proved the testimony to be Divine; now that which Christ delivered to them as a Divine Testimony, was his being the Messiah, and therefore, by the same reason they believed him to be one sent from God, they ought to have believed him to be the Messiah; for one sent from God could never falsify in the main of his message, as this was of our Saviours preaching. And thence it is observable, our Saviour did not shew forth his Divine power till he entered upon his office of preaching, thereby making it appear he intended this as the great evidence of the truth of the doctrine which he preached to them. And herein the blind man in the Gospel saw more truth and reason than the whole Court of Sanhedrin, before which in probability he was convened about his cure by Christ; for when they sought to get something out of him in disparagement of our Saviours person and miracle, he sharply and roundly tells them, when they said they knew God spake to Moses, but for this fellow, we know not from whence he is. Why herein, saith he, is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and

Joh. 9. 29. *yet he hath opened mine eyes. If this man were not of God he*
 30. *could do nothing* (as though he had said) is it not plain that
 ver. 33. *this man is imploied by God in the world by the miracles*
which he doth ? for otherwise God would not so readily af-
 ver. 31. *fist him in doing such great works ; for we know that God*
heareth not sinners : but if any man be a worshipper of God,
and doth his will, him he heareth ; i. e. If this man pretend-
ed a Commission from heaven falsely (whereby he would be
the greatest of sinners) can we think God would so miracu-
ulously assist him ? but we know by our Law, if one come
with a Commission from God, and draw men not to Idola-
try, which is meant by a worshipper of God, such a one God
is present with, and we are bound to believe him. And
for this very miracle, of curing one born blind, was the
like ever heard of before ? did ever Moses or the Prophets
do it ? Thus we see what strong rational evidence there was
in this miracle of Christ in the judgment of this blind man,
which he uttered with so much reason before the Court of
Sanhedrin, when he knew how like he was to be excommu-
nicated for it ; and yet this very person was as yet ignorant
 ver. 36. *that Christ was the true Messiah, as appears by the sequel*
of the chapter ; but upon Christs revelation of himself to
 ver. 38. *him, he presently believed on him. How strangely irrational*
were the Jews then in rejecting our Saviour when his
miracles not only exceeded those of Moses both in number
and quality ; but which was more, they saw themselves the
miracles which Christ did, but they received those of Moses
only upon the credit of their Fathers. And from the strength
of the evidence arising from the power of miracles it is, that
St. Peter tells the promiscuous Assembly, Acts 2. 22. That
Jesus of Nazareth was a man approved of God among them,
by miracles, wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the
midst of them, as they themselves also knew. He appeals
to their own knowledge, which he would not certainly have
done, had it not been in a case beyond all dispute among
them. Which was a thing so notorious among them, that
we find the Pharisees themselves confessing it, What do we
 John 11. *Far this man doth many miracles : Now then in a Nation*
 47. *whose*

whole religion had been established by miracles, and the certainty of the truth of it, among those who then professed it, did depend so much upon the constant credit which the report of the miracles done at the setting of their Law had among them; what could be a more rational convincing way of proceeding, than for our Saviour to manifest by a greater power of miracles in himself the undoubted credentials of his commission from heaven; and that he was the true *Messias*, which was foretold by their own most sacred and authentic records? Which will appear more,

Because the power of miracles did evidently declare that he was the very person promised. For if the exact correspondence of the event to the predictions in a Nation owning them as Divine, be an undoubted evidence that they are exactly fulfilled, our Saviour was most certainly the person so often spoken of in the *Old Testament*. For many of the Prophecies of the *Old Testament* concerning the *Messias*, if they were not fulfilled in *Christ*, in the conditions the Jews have been in since their dispersion, (which fell out exactly according to the prediction of *Christ*) it is impossible they should be fulfilled at all. So that either the predictions must lose their Divine authority, or they must be accomplished in our Blessed Saviour. For, as *Tertullian* sharply says to the Jew, *Redde statum Judaei quem Christus inveniat, & alium contende venire*; let the people of the Jews be in their former condition, and then plead for a *Messias* to come. For can any thing be more plain than that the *Messias* was to be born in *Bethlehem of Judea*? but where is that now, and how long, since the Jews enjoyed any civil Polity there? what is become of the second Temple in the time of which the desire of all Nations should come? Is not *Jerusalem* already destroyed, and the oblation there long since ceased, which was to come to pass so soon after the *Messias*, and did accordingly? Is not the Scepter yet departed from *Judah*, and the Lawgiver from between his feet, and is not *Shiloh* yet come? What strange unintelligible weeks were those of *Daniel*, if they were extended to so indefinite a space of time as the Jews pretend? and if indefinite, what certain ground could from thence be gathered of any time wherein their

9. 3.

2.

C. Judaeos
c. 13:

- accomplishment was to be expected? but not to expatiate on those things which are already so largely proved beyond all possibility of contradiction, by the antient and modern learned writers against the Jews: To insist therefore on our present business; Are not the Prophecies concerning the miracles which the *Messias* should work exactly fulfilled in *Christ*?
- Isa. 35. 5. 6. *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an Hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.* He must be a great stranger in the history of the *New Testament* that is to seek for an exact fulfilling of this Prophecy. Nay, and the Jewish
- v. Grot. in Midrasch upon Psal. 146. 8 saith that when *Messias* comes, Joh. 9. 32. he should open the eyes of the blind; and the Jews themselves often speak of the great miracles which the *Messias* should do when he appears; and therefore out of their own mouths will they be condemned, when the miracles of *Christ* make it so evident that he was the true *Messias*. Hence when *John Baptist* sent his Disciples to *Christ*, for them to be fully satisfied concerning him, *Christ* gives this answer to them; he
- Mat. 11. 5. bids them tell him *the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, and the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, &c.* as though the mentioning of these miracles was sufficient to make it appear to them who he was whom they came to enquire after. And therefore it is observable that *John Baptist* himself, though greater then the
- Mat. 11. 9. Prophets, nay then whom there was not a greater born of women by our Saviour's own Testimony; yet of him it is said,
- Joh. 10. 41. that he wrought no miracle: of which no account can be given so probable and rational, as that *God* in his infinite wisdom was pleased so to order it, that the evidences of our Saviour's being the *Messias* might be made more clear by the miracles which he wrought; that the minds of people might not be distracted between *John* and *Christ*; he therefore reserved the glory of miracles wholly to the name of *Christ*, that there might be no pretence of a competition between *John* and him.

§. 4. Another reason of the necessity of miracles in our Saviour by way of rational evidence, is, the overthrowing the power and Kingdom of the Devil in the world. For which purpose

purpose it is observable that the Devil had scarce ever greater power over the bodies of men as well as their souls, than at that time; thence we read of such a multitude of *Demoniacks* in the Gospel. For it seems very harsh to interpret those meely of *Epileptical* and *Lunatick* persons, both because the *δαμονιζέμενοι*, & *σταλνυζέμενοι* & *ᾠδελυτικοί* are mentioned distinctly, and that it appears by the primitive Church afterwards how frequent it was to eject the Devil out of possessed persons. Nay so far am I from thinking that the *Demoniacks* were meer *Lunaticks*, that I rather think with *Vossius* that the *Lunaticks* were truly *Demoniacks*, only they were not constantly under the power of the Devil, but as their *paroxysmes* returned upon them, the Devil loving to fish in such troubled waters. And thence the same person is called a *Lunatick* in one place, who is called a *Demoniack* in another; because he did *rue in principis lunationum*, as the *Arabick* version expresseth it; or as *Rusticus Elpidius* more fully explains it,

Mat. 4. 24.

De Idolatr. l. 2. c. 19.

Mar. 17.

14.

Luk. 9. 39.

*Reperat in medium rabies horrenda furoris
Dæmonis afflatu, propria qui peste nocivus
Allidit capras fædo discrimine mentes,
Mensura deciduos cum Luna recolligit ignes.*

Lib. 5.

Theo hylast is of opinion, that the Jews in the time of our Saviour supposed, that the souls of dead men became *Dæmons*, and thence we read in Scripture of the *Demoniacks* among the *Tombs*: but it is far more probable which *Grotius* conceives, that the Jews were of opinion, that the souls of dead men did hover up and down about their bodies, and that these were so long under the Devils power, which many of the Jews to this day believe, and make use of the instance of the *Pythionisse* raising *Samuel*; on which account the Devils to favour an opinion so advantageous to their interest, might appear with greater terror and fury about their burying places, as we see they did in those possessed persons. But on whatever account it was, we finde it evident that about the time of our Saviours appearance, and some time after, the truly *ἐκστατικοί* were very frequent; whether it were that the

Mat. 8. 28.

the Devil by such frequent possessions of persons, and making them do such strange things, might thereby endeavour to invalidate the evidence of our Saviours miracles (from whence it is probable the Pharisees raised their calumny, that Christ did miracles by Belzebub, because they saw so many strange appearances caused by possessed persons) or whether it were through the admirable providence of God, which might give Satan the greater liberty at that time, on purpose to heighten the glory of our Saviour in dispossessing of him, and thereby to give the highest rational evidence, that his power was of God, which tended so much to the destruction of the Kingdom of Satan.

§. 5.

And hence the Primitive Christians did so much triumph, and as it were insults over the Devil where ever they found him, making him to remove his lodgings from possessed persons, by a writ of ejection from the name of Christ. Thence Origen rationally concludes that Christ had his power given him from above, because at his very name the Devils forsook the bodies which they had possessed. *ει γὰρ μὴ ἀνέθεντο ἡμῶν ὁδοῖς αὐτοῖς, ὡς αὐτοῖς ἐκείνους, ὡς αὐτοῖς ἐκείνους, ὡς αὐτοῖς ἐκείνους.* And be-
where tells us, that even the meanest sort of Christians without any ceremony, but merely by their prayers, did ordinarily eject the Devils out of mens bodies: *ὡς ἐπίπας γὰρ ἰδὼν τὸ πῦρ*

Orig. c.
Cels. l. 3.

Lib. 7.

αὐτῶν, παύσεως τὸ ἐν τῇ λόγῳ χρίστῳ χρίστῳ τὸ ἐν δυνάμει αὐτοῦ, καὶ αὐτοῦ, ὡς αὐτοῦ, ὡς αὐτοῦ, ὡς αὐτοῦ. Ordinary Christians, saith he, most commonly do this, the grace of Christ by its word thereby discovering the contemptibleness and infirmity of the Devils, that in order to their ejection they did not so much want any learned or experienced Christian. And for this they appeal to the Heathens themselves, as appears not only by the challenge of Tertullian already mentioned, but by the Testimony of almost all of them who have writ against the Heathens in vindication of the Christian Religion. Thence Minusius Felix, *Hac omnia sciunt plerique, pars vestrum, isti demones de semetipsis confiteri, quoties à nobis tormentis verborum, & orationis incendiis de corporibus exiguntur.* *Ipsi*

P. 317d.
Quæ.

Saturam

Saturnus & Scarpus, & Jupiter & quicquid demonum colitis, vultu dolore, quod sumus eloquuntur, nec utique in turpitudinem sui, nonnulli praesertim vestrum assistentibus, mentiuntur. Ipsi testibus eos esse Dæmonas, de se verum consentientibus credite; adjurati enim per Deum verum & solum, inviti, miseri corporibus inhorrescunt; & vel exiliunt statim, vel evanescent gradatim, prout fides patientis adjuras, aut gratia curantis affiras. Can we now think the Devil should not only forsake his Tyranny over the bodies of men, but let go so advantageous a pillar of his tyranny over the consciences of men in Idolatrous worship, as the concealing himself was, had he not been forced to it by a power far greater then his own? So Cyprian ad Demetrianum, appeals to him being the Proconsul of Africa, about the same thing (who had written sharply against the Christians) for speaking of the Devils whom they worshipped in their Idols: O si audire eos velles & videre, quando à nobis adjurantur & torquentur Spiritualibus flagris, & verborum tormentis de obsessis corporibus ejiciuntur, quando ejulantes & gementes voce humana, & potestate divina flagella & verbera sentientes, venturum judicium consentiunt; vni & cognosce vera esse qua dicimus: and a little after, Videbis sub manu nostra stare victos, & tremere captivos, quos tu suspicio & veneraris ut dominos. Did ever any of the Heathen Magicians (of which there were good store) extort such things from the Devils, as the Christians did meeterly by their prayers, and invocations of the name of God and Christ? did they ever make them confess to be what they were, not only in possessed bodies, but in their Temples too? That was beyond the power of their Ephesian letters, or any of their Magical Incantations. Did the Devils ever dread so much the name of Socrates or Aristides, as they did that of God and of Christ? Of which Lactantius thus speaks, Quo audito tremunt, exclamant, & uri se verberarique testantur, & interrogati qui sint, quando venerint, quando in hominem irrepserint, consentiunt sic extorti, & excruciatu virtute divini numini exulant; propter hac verbera & minas, sanctos & justos viros semper oderunt. And, even Apollo himself at the Name of Christ trembled, as much as ever the Pythian Prophets did in her greatest furies; So Prudentius tells us,

Ad Demetrian.
f. 12.

De justitia:
lib 5. c. 21.

M m

Torquentur

Apothcos.

*Torquetur Apollo
Nomine percussus Christi; nec fulmina Verbi
Ferre potest; agitant miserum tot verbera lingua,
Quot laudata Dei resonant miracula Christi.*

To these we may add what Firmicus saith to the same purpose, *Ecce Damon est quem colis; cum Dei & Christi ejus nomen audierit, contremiscit, & ut interrogantibus nobis respondens trepidantia verba, vix se colligit; adherens homini laceratur, uritur, vapulatur, & statim de commissis sceleribus confitetur.* By which Testimonies it appears what power over Satan, when he was in his Kingdom, the Christians by the power of Christ had; not, as though the bare name of Christ had so great an efficacy in the ejection of Devils, as L. i. c. Cels. Origen seems to be of opinion (in a discourse about the efficacy of names, unworthy of so great a Philosopher) but, that God might manifest to the world the truth that was contained in that name, he did give a power to such as made use of it, of working miracles by it. And thence we read in Scriptures, that some who were not thoroughly Christians, but yet professed the truth of the Gospel, and that what they did was for the honour of Christ, had a power of casting out Devils, and doing many wonderful things through his Name.

§. 6. By these and many other Testimonies which might be produced out of the Primitive Church, we find an exact accomplishment of our Saviours promise to his Disciples when he took his leave of them: *And these signs shall follow them that believe, In my name shall they cast out Devils, &c.* This power then in the Primitive Church had a twofold argument in it, both as it was a manifestation of the truth of the predilections of our Saviour, and as it was an evidence of the Divine Power of Christ; when his Name so long after his ascension had so great a command over all the infernal Spirits, and that so evidently, that at that time when the Christians did as it were Tyrannies over Satan so in his own Territories, yet then the greatest of his Magicians had no power to hurt the bodies of the Christians, which is a thing Origen takes much notice of. For when Celsus saith, from Diogenes

422 p m

Egypt that *Magick* could only hurt ignorant and wicked
 men, and had no power over *Philosophers*; *Origen* replies, first,
 that *Philosophy* was no such charm against the power of *Ma-
 gick*, as appears by *Magarenes* who writ the story of *A-
 pollonius Tyaneus*, the famous *Magician* and *Philosopher*,
 who therein mentions how *Euphrates* and an *Epichrean*
 (in ἀγνοῦς φιλόσοφος no vulgar *Philosophers*) were caught by
 the *Magick* of *Apollonius*, (and although *Philostatus* dis-
 owns this History of *Magarenes* as *fabulous*, yet he that
 thinks *Philostatus* for that, to be of any greater credit, is
 much deceived, of whom *Lud. Vives* gives this true character,
 that he doth magna Homeri mendacia majoribus mendaciis
 corrigere, mend one hole and make three) but saith *Origen* as
 to the *Christians*, this is undoubtedly true: Ἡ δὲ βασιλευμεθα ὁ
 ἡμεῖς ἡ τῇ πείρᾳ ἐπαλαθόντες, ὅτι οἱ καὶ ἡ παρὰ τὸν Ἰησοῦ καὶ Cont. Cels.
 οἱ μὲν δὲ πνεύματος ἀδελφοὶ, ὁ δὲ πνεύματος καὶ τὸν δαγγαλιὸν αὐτῶν τοῖς αὐτοῖς L. 6. p. 301.
 καὶ πνεύματος ὁ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ καὶ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ καὶ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ
 ὅτι μαρτυρεῖται διὰ τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ. This, saith he, we are
 most certain of, and have found it by experience true, that those
 who according to the principles of Christianity do worship God
 over all, through *Jesus*, and do live according to the Gospel,
 being constant in their solemn prayers night and day, are not
 obnoxious to the power of any *Magick* or *Devils* whatsoever.
 Now then, if the *Devil* who had then so much power over
 others, had none upon the true followers of *Christ*, and, if
 in stead of that they had so great a commanding power over
 the *Devil*, even in things which tended most to his disadvan-
 tage, not only dislodging him out of *bodys*, but out of his
Idolatrous Temples; what can be more evident, then that this
 power which was so efficacious for the overthrowing the
Kingdom of Satan, must needs be far greater then the power
 of *Satan* is? For, it is an undoubted *Maxim* in natural rea-
 son, that whatever is put out of its former place by force and
 violence, is extruded by something stronger then its self; for, if
 the force on either side were equal, there could be no dispos-
 sessing of either; if any thing then be cast out of its former
 possession unwillingly, it is an undeniable proof there was
 some power greater then his who was dispossessed. Now, we
 cannot conceive, if there be such malignant spirits as by

De trad.
d sc. l. 5.

many undeniable proofs it is evident there are, that they should willingly *quit* their *possessions* to such a *doctrine* which tends to the *unavoidable* ruin of their interest in the World; if then the *power* of this *Doctrine* hath *overthrown* the *Devil's Kingdom* in the World, where-ever it hath been truly *entertained*, it must necessarily follow, that this *power* is far above the *power* of any *damned spirits*. Now, what *folly* and *madness* was it in the *Heathens* to worship those for *Gods*, which they could not but see, if they would open their eyes, were under so great *slavery* to a *power* above them, which could make *them* *conscious* what was most to their *disadvantage* in the *presence* of their great *Adorers*?

- §. 7. Neither ought the many *counterfeits* and *Impostures* which have been in the world in this kind since the *establishment* of *Christian Religion* (among the *advancers* of particular *interests* and *designs*) make us *suspect* the *truth* of those things which were done in the first *Ages* of the *Church of Christ*. For first, it stands to the *greatest reason*, that the strongest *arguments* for the *truth* of a *Religion* ought to be *fetched* from the *Ages* of its first *appearance* in the world; if then the *evidence* be *undoubted* as to those *first times*, we ought to *embrace* our *Religion* as *true*, whatever the *Impostures* have been among those who have apparently *gone aside* from that *purity* and *simplicity* of the *Gospel*, which had so great *power*. Then *secondly*, if all that hath been done in this kind of *ejecting Devils*, where *Christianity* is owned, be acknowledged for *Impostures*; one of these *two things* must be supposed as the *ground* of it: either, that there was no such thing as a *real possession* by the *Devil*, or else there was no such thing as a *dispossessing him*: If the first, then hereby will be seen a *confirmation* of our former *argument*, that where *Christianity* is owned, by the *power* of that, the *Devil* is more *curbed* and *restrained*, then where it is not, or else is much *overrun* with *ignorance* and *superstition*. Of the latter, the *ages* of the *Christian Church*, from the 10th. *Century*, to the *beginning* of the 16th. *current*, are a *clear evidence*: Of the first, all those who have been *conversant* in the places where *Paganism* or *gross Idolatry* do yet reign, will bring in their *creditable testimonies*, how *tyrannical* the *power* of the *Devil*

is yet among them. If it be not so then, where careful *endeavours* have been used for *retriving* the *ancient purity* of *Christian doctrine* and *worship*, we ought to impute it to the power of him who is *stronger* than *Satan*, who, where-ever he comes to dwell, doth *dispossess* him of his former *habitations*. If the *second* then be *entertained* as the *ground* of *concluding* all things as *Impostures*, which are accounted *dispossession* of *Satan*, viz. that he never is really *dispossessed*, then it must either be said, that where he is once *seized*, there is no possibility of *ejecting* him; which is to say, that the *Devil* hath an *absolute* and *infinite* power, and that there is no power greater than his, which is to own him for *God*; or else, that *God* suffers him to *tyrannize* where and how he will, which is contrary to *divine Providence*, and the *care* *God* takes of the *world*, and of the *good* of *mankind*; or else lastly, that those persons who pretend to do it, are not such persons who are armed so much with the power of *Christ*, nor possessed with such a due *spirit* of the *Gospel*, which hath *command* over these *infernal spirits*. And this, in the cases pretended by the great *Juglers* and *Impostors* of the *Christian world*, the *Papish-Priests* have been so *notorious*, that none of their own party of any great *faith* or *credit* would stand to *vouch* them. And, we have this *impregnable argument* against all such *Impostures*, that the matters which they by such *actions* would give an *evidence* to, being so *vastly* different from, if not in some things *diametrically* opposite to the first *delivery* and *design* of the *Christian faith*, it is *inconsistent* with the way used for the *confirmation* of *Christian Religion* in the first *publishing* of it, to attest the *truth* of such things by any *real miracles*: For, so it would *invalidate* the great force of the *evidences* of the *truth* of *Christianity*, if the same *argument* should be used for the *proving* of that which in the *judgment* of any *impartial person* was not *delivered*, when the *truth* of the *doctrine* of *Christ* was confirmed by so many and *uncontrouled* *miracles*. But, hereby we see what *unconceivable prejudice* hath been done to the *true primitive doctrine* of the *Gospel*; and, what *summing-blocks* have been laid in the way of *considerative persons*, to keep them from embracing the *truly Christian faith*.

by those who would be thought the infallible directors of men in it, by making use of the broad seal of Heaven (let only to the truth of the Scriptures) to confirm their ancient and superstitious ways of worship. For, if I once see that which I looked on as an undoubted evidence of divine power brought to attest any thing directly contrary to divine Revelation; I must either conclude, that God may contradict himself by sealing both parts of a contradiction, which is both blasphemous and impossible; or, that that society of men which own such things, is not at all tender of the honour of Christian Doctrine, but seeks to set up an interest contrary to it, and matters not what disadvantage is done to the ground of Religion by such unworthy pretences; and, which of these two is more rational and true, let every ones conscience judge. And therefore, it is much the interest of the Christian World to have all such frauds and impostures discovered, which do so much disservice to the Christian faith, and are such secret fomenters of Atheism and Infidelity. But, how far that promise of our Saviour, that they which believe in his Name, shall cast out Devils, and do many miracles, may extend even in these last ages of the world to such generous and primitive-spirited Christians, who out of a great and deep love of the truth of Christianity and tenderness to the souls of men, should go among Heathens and Infidels to convert them only to Christ (and not to a secular interest, under pretence of an infallible Head) is not here a place fully to enquire. I confess, I cannot see any reason why God may not yet for the conviction of Infidels, employ such a power of miracles, although there be not such necessity of it, as there was in the first propagation of the Gospel, there being some evidences of the power of Christianity now, which were not to clear then (as the overthrowing the Kingdom of Satan in the world, the prevailing of Christianity notwithstanding persecuted against it; the recovery of it from amidst all the corruptions which were mixed with it, the consent of those parties in the common foundations of Christianity, which yet differed from each other with great bitterness of spirit) though it be not of that necessity now, when the Scriptures are conveyed to us in a certain uninterrupted manner; yet, God

Matth. 16.
17.

please out of his abundant provision for the satisfaction of the minds of men, concerning the truth of Christian Doctrine, to employ good men to do something which may manifest the power of Christ to be above the Devils, whom they worship. And therefore, I should far sooner believe the relation of the miracles of Xaverius and his Brethren, employed in the conversion of Infidels, then Lipsius his *Virgo Hallensis* and *Asprectus*, could it but be made evident to me that the design of those persons had more of Christianity then Popeny in it; that is, that they went more upon a design to bring the souls of the Infidels to heaven, then to enlarge the authority and jurisdiction of the Roman Church.

But whatever the truth of those miracles, or the design of those persons were, we have certain and undoubted evidence of the truth of those miracles, whereby Christianity was first propagated, and the Kingdom of Satan overthrown in the World; Christ thereby making it appear, that his power was greater then the Devils, who had possession, because he overcame him, took from him all his armour wherein he trusted; and divided his spoils; i.e. dispossessed him of mens bodies, and his Idolatrous Temples, silenced his Oracles, nonplust his Magicians, and at last, when Christianity had overcome by suffering, wrested the worldly power and Empire out of the Devils hands, and employed it against himself. Neither may we think, because since that time the Devil hath got some ground in the world again by the large spread of Mahometism, and the general corruptions in the Christian world, that therefore there was no argument of divine power; because the truth of Christianity is not tyed to any particular places; because such a falling away hath been foretold in Scripture; and therefore the truth of them is proved by it, and because God himself hath threatened, that those who will not receive the truth in the love of it, shall be given up to strong delusions. Doth not this then, in stead of abating the strength of the argument, confirm it more, and that nothing is fallen out in the Christian world, but what was foretold by those whom God employed in the converting of it? But, we are neither without some fair hopes, even from that divine Revelation which was sealed by uncontrouled evidence, that there may be yet a

§. 8.

Luke 11.
21, 22.

time

time to come when Christ will recover his Churches to their primitive purity and simplicity; but withal, I think we are not to measure the future felicity of the Church by outward splendor and greatness (which too many so strongly fancy) but by a recovery of that true spirit of Christianity which breathed in the first ages of the Church, whatever the outward condition of the Church may be: For, if worldly greatness, and ease, and riches, were the first impairers of the purity of Christian Religion; it is hard to conceive how the restoring of the Church of Christ to its true glory, can be by the advancing of that, which gives so great an occasion to pride and sensuality, which are so contrary to the design of Christian Religion; unless we suppose men free from those corruptions, which continual experience still tells the world the Rulers as well as members of the Christian society are subject to. Neither may that be wondered at, when such unevenness of parts is now discovered in the great Luminaries of the world, and the Sun himself is found to have his macula, as though the Sun had a purple fever, or, as Kircher expresseth it, *Ipsæ Phæbus, qui rerum omnium in universa natura Theatro spectabilium longè pulcherrimus omnium opinione est habitus, hoc seculo tandem fumosa facie, ac infatu vulnè maculis prodiit; diceret enim variolis laborare sententem*: I speak not this, as though an outward flourishing condition of the Church were inconsistent with its purity; but then the way to refine it, were to throw it into the flames of persecution; but, that the advancement of the flourishing condition of the Church, is not merely by outward pomp and grandeur, and that the purity of the Church is not inconsistent with a state of outward difficulties, which the experience of the Primitive Church gives an irrefragable demonstration of. Thus much may serve to shew the necessity of a power of miracles, conjoined with the Christian Doctrine, to manifest the truth of it by overthrowing the Kingdom of the great Antichrist the Devil, who had usurped so much Tyranny over the World.

§. 9.

The last reason, why a power of Miracles was so necessary for confirming the truth of the Gospel, is, because the Gospel was to be propagated over the World without any other

Propyl. A
gonist. ad
Oedipum.
cap. 2.

nal evidence, then was contained in the miracles wrought for the confirmation of it. Now, the admirable success which this Doctrine found in the World, considering all the circumstances of it; doth make it clear what certainty there was, that the miracles which were wrought were true, and they were certain evidences that the Doctrine attested by them was from God. Now, this will appear from these two things:

That no rational account can be given why the Apostles should undertake to publish such a Doctrine, unless they had been undoubtedly certain that the Doctrine was true, and they had sufficient evidence to persuade others to believe it.

1.

That no satisfactory account can be given, considering the nature of the doctrine of Christ, and the manner of its propagation, why it should meet with so great acceptance in the world, had there not been such convincing evidence as might fully persuade men of the truth of it.

2.

I begin with the first, from the publishers of this Doctrine in the world: All that I here require by way of a Postulation or supposition, are only these two things, which no man right in his wits I suppose will deny: 1. *That men are so far rational agents, that they will not set upon any work of moment and difficulty, without sufficient grounds inducing them to it; and by so much the greater the work is, the more sure and steadfast had the grounds need to be which they proceed upon.* 2. *That the Apostles or first Publishers of the Christian doctrine were not men distracted, or bereft of their wits, but acted by principles of common sense, reason, and understanding, as other men in the world do: Which, if any one should be so far beside his wits as to question, if he have but patience and understanding enough to read and consider those admirable Writings of theirs, which are conveyed to us by a certain uninterrupted Tradition as any thing in the world hath been; and, by that time he will see cause to alter his judgement, and to say, that they are not mad, but speak the words of the greatest truth and soberness.* These things supposed, I now proceed to the proving of the thing in hand, which will be done by these three things: *First, That the Apostles could not but know how hazardous an employment the preaching of the Gospel would be to*

them.

them. Secondly, That no motive can be conceived sufficient for them to undertake such an employment, but the infallible truth of the Doctrine which they preached. Thirdly, That the greatest assurance they had themselves of the truth of their Doctrine, was by being eye-witnesses of the miracles of Christ.

First, That the Apostles could not but understand the hazard of their employment, notwithstanding which they cheerfully undertook it. That men armed with no external power; not cryed up for their wit and learning, and carrying a doctrine with them so contrary to the general inclinations of the world, having nothing in it to recommend it to mankind but the Truth of it, should go about to persuade the world to part with the Religion they owned, and was settled by their laws, and to embrace such a religion as called them off from all the things they loved in this world, and to prepare themselves by mortification & self-denial for another world, is a thing to humane reason incredible; unless we suppose them acted by a higher Spirit than mankind is ordinarily acted by. For, what is there so desirable in continual reproaches and contumelies? what delight is there in racks and prisons? what agreeableness in flames and martyrdoms to make men undergo some, nay, all of these rather than disown that doctrine which they came to publish? Yet, these did the Apostles cheerfully undergo in order to the conversion of the world, to the truth of that doctrine which they delivered to it. And not only so, but though they did foresee them, they were not discouraged from this undertaking by it. I confess, when men are upon hopes of profit and interest in the world, engaged upon a design which they promise themselves impunity in, having power on their side, though afterwards things should fall out contrary to their expectation, such persons may die in such a cause, because they must; and some may carry it out with more resolution, partly through an innate fortitude of spirit, heightened with the advantages of Religion, or an Enthusiastic temper. But, it is hard to conceive that such persons would have undertaken so hazardous an employment, if beforehand they had foreseen what they must have undergone for it. But now, the Apostles did foreknow that bonds and imprisonment, nay, death it self must be undergone in a violent

manner, for the sake of the doctrine which they preached; yet, notwithstanding all this, they go boldly and with resolution on with their work, and give not over because of any hardships and persecutions they met withall. One of the chiefest of them, S. Peter, and as forward as any in Preaching the Gospel, Joh 21. 19. had the very manner of his death foretold him by Christ himself, before his Ascension, yet soon after, we find him preaching Christ in the midst of those who had crucified him, and telling them to their faces the greatness of their sin in it, and appealing to the miracles which Christ had done among them, and bidding them repent and believe in him whom they had crucified, if ever they would be saved: And this he did, Acts 2. 21, 23, 38. not only among the people who gave their consent to the crucifying of Christ, but soon after, being convened together with John, before the Court of Sanhedrin (probably the very same which not long before had sentenced Christ to death) for a miracle wrought by them, with what incredible boldness doth he to their faces tell them of their murdering Christ; and withall, that there was no other way to salvation but by him whom they had crucified! Be it known unto you all (saith Peter to the Sanhedrin) and to all the people of Israel, that by the Name of Jesus Christ whom ye have crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. What an heroick freedom of spirit appears in these words! what magnanimity and courage was there now in that person, who durst in the face of this Court tell them of their murder, and that there was no salvation but by him whom they had crucified? Well might they wonder at the boldness of the man, who feared not the same death which they had so lately brought their Lord and Master to.

Neither was this singly the case of Peter and John, but all the rest of the Apostles undertook their work with the same resolution and preparation of Spirit to undergo the greatest hardship in the World for the sake of the truths they preached. And accordingly, as far as Ecclesiastical history can ascertain of it, they did all but John, (and that to make good 9. 10. Joh 21. 12.

the prediction of *Christ*) suffer violent deaths by the hands of those who persecuted them merely for their doctrine. And which is most observable, when *Christ* designed them first of all for this work, he told them beforehand of reproaches, persecutions, all manner of hardships, nay, of death itself which they must undergo for his sake. All that he gave them by way of encouragement, was, that they could only kill the body, and not the soul, and therefore that they should fear him only who could destroy both body and soul in hell; all the support they had, was, an expectation in another world, and that animated them to go through all the hardships of this. Where do we ever read of any such boldness and courage in the most knowing Philosophers of the Heathens? with what faintness and misgivings of mind doth *Socrates* speak in his famous Discourse, supposed to be made by him before his death? how uncertainly doth he speak of a state of Immortality? and yet in all probability *Plato* set it forth with all advantages imaginable. Where do we find that ever any of the great friends of *Socrates*, who were present at his death, as *Phaedon*, *Cebes*, *Crito*, and *Simmius*, durst enter the *Areopagus*, and condemn them there for the murder of *Socrates*, though this would be far short of what the Apostles did? Why were they not so charitable as to inform the world better of those grand truths of the being of God and Immortality of souls, if at least they were fully convinced of them themselves? Why did not *Plato* at least speak out, and tell the World the truth, and not disguise his discourses under feigned names, the better to avoid accusation and the fate of *Socrates*? How doth he mince his excellent matter, and play it as it were at Bo-peep with his readers, sometimes appearing, and then pulling in his horns again? It may not be an improbable conjecture that the death of *Socrates* was the foundation of the *Academy*; I mean, of that cautelous doctrine of withholding assent, and being both pro and con, sometimes of this side, and sometimes of that: for *Socrates* his death had made all his friends very fearful of being too dogmatical. And, *Plato* himself had too much riches, and withall too much of a Courtier in him to hazard the dear prison of his soul, viz. his body, merely for an aethereal vehicle. He had rather let his

soul flutter up and down in a terrestrial matter, or the cage it was pent up in, then hazard too violent an opening of it by the hands of the Atrypagni. And the great Roman Orator among the rest of Plato's sentiments had learnt this too; for, although in his discourses he hath many times sufficiently laid open the folly of the Heathen worship and Theology, yet he knows how to bring himself off safe enough with the people; and will be sure to be dogmatical only in this, that nothing is to be innovated in the Religion of a Common wealth, and that the customs of our Ancestors are inviolably to be observed. Which principles, had they been true as they were safe for the persons who spake them, the Christian Religion had never gained any entertainment in the world; for, where ever it came, it met with this potent prejudice that it was looked on as an innovation, and therefore was shrewdly suspected by the Governours of Common wealths, and the Preachers of it punished as factions and seditious persons; which was all the pretext the wise Politicians of the world had for their cruel and inhumane persecutions of such multitudes of peaceable and innocent Christians. Now, when these things were foretold by the Apostles themselves before their going abroad so plainly, that with the same faith they did believe the doctrine they Preached to be true, they must believe that all these things should come to pass, what courage and magnanimity of spirit was it in them thus to encounter dangers, and as it were courts the flames? Nay, and before the time was come that they must die, to seal the truth of their Doctrine, their whole life was a continual peregrination, wherein they were as so many Jobs in pilgrimage, encountered with perils and dangers on every side; of which, one of the most painful and successful, S. Paul hath given in such a large ^{2 Cor. 6. 49.} Inventory of his perils, that the very reading of them were ^{5, 8, 9.} enough to undo a poor Epicurean Philosopher, and at once to spoil him of the two pillars of his happiness, the quietness of his mind and ease of his body. Thus, we see what a hazardous employment that was which the Apostles went upon, and that it was such as they very well understood the difficulty of before they set upon it.

Secondly, *We cannot find out any rational motive which* §. 12.

N n 3.

could.

could carry them through so hazardous an employment; but the full convictions of their minds of the undoubted truth and certainty of the doctrine which they delivered. We find before that no vulgar motives in the World could carry them upon that design which they went upon; Could they be led by ambition and vain glory, who met with such reproaches where ever they went? and not only persecutions of the Tongue, but the sharper ones of the Hands too? we never read of any but the *Primitive Christians* who were ambitious of being *Martyrs*, and thought long till they were in the flames which made *Arrius Antoninus* being Proconsul of *Asia*, when *Christians* in multitudes beset his tribunal and thronged in to be condemned, say to them, ὦ Σαῦοι, οἱ θεῶντι ἀποδίδουσι, καὶ οὐκ ἐνδοξάζετε. *O miserable people, had not ye wages enough to end your lives at home, but ye must crowd for an execution!* This was a higher ambition by far then any of those *municipal gloria*, those *Chameleons* that lived on the breath of applause, the *Heathen Philosophers* ever reached to, who were as *Tertullian* expresseth it, *Homines gloria & eloquentia solius libidinosi*, *Unsatiabable thirsters after the honour and eloquence of the World*; but, the Spirit of a *Christian* did soar too high to quarry on so mean a prey. When the more sober *Heathens* had taken a stricter notice of the carriages and lives of the *Preachers of the Gospel* and all their genuine followers, they instead of the common and rude name of *Impostors*, gave them a more civil title of *Philosophers*, and looked upon their doctrine as a sublimer kind of *Philosophy*, non utique divinum negotium existimant sed magis Philosophia genus, as *Tertullian* tells us; because the *Philosophers* pretended so much in moral virtues which they saw the *Christians* so excellent in; but, as *Tertullian* there replies, nomen hoc Philosophorum Demonum non fugat, *The Devil was never afraid of a Philosopher's beard*, nor were diseases cured by the touch of a *Philosophick Pallium*. There was something more *Divine* in *Christians* then in the grave *Philosophers*; and that, not only in reference to their lives, and the *Divine power* which was seen in them, but in reference to the truth and certainty of their doctrine, it being a true character given of both, by the same excellent Writer in behalf of the *Christians* of his time:

Tertul. ad Scapul. c. 5.

Apolog. c. 47.

Apolog. c. 46.

Veritatem Philosophi quidem affectant, possident autem Christiani; What the Philosophers desired only the Christians enjoy, *Ad. Nationes. l. 1 c. 4.*
 which was Truth: and, as he elsewhere more fully speaks,
*Mimic Philosophi affectant veritatem, & affectando corrumpunt, ut qui gloriam cupiunt; Christiani eam necessario appetunt & integri prestant, ut qui saluti sue curant. Truth is the Philosophers mistress, which by courting he vitiates and corrupts, looking at nothing but his own glory: but truth is the Christians Matron whose directions he observes and follows, because he regards no glory but that to come. And, to let them further see what a difference there was between a Christian and a Philosopher, he concludes that discourse with these words, Quid adeo simile Philosophus & Christianus? Græcia Discipulus & cæli? fama negotiator & vita? verborum & factuum operator? rerum adificator & destructor? amicus & inimicus erroris? veritatis interpolator & integrator? furator ejus & custos? As much distance (saith he) as there is between Greece and Heaven, between applause and eternal glory, between words and things, between building and destroying, between truth and error, between a plagiarist and corrupter of Truth, and a preserver and advancer of it; so much is there between a Philosopher and a Christian. The Heathens might suspect indeed some kind of affinity between the first Preachers of the Gospel and the ancient Sophists of Greece, because of their frequent going from place to place, and pretending a kind of Enthusiasm as they did: but, as much difference as there is between a Knight Errant and Hercules, between a Mountebank and Hippocrates, that, and much greater there is between a Greek Sophist and an Apostle. Socrates in Plato's *Euthydemus*, hath excellently discovered the vanity and futility of those persons under the persons of *Euthydemus* and *Dionysodorus*, and so likewise in his *Protagoras*; their intent was only like the retiaries in the Roman *Spillacles* to catch their adversaries in a net; to entangle them with some captious question or other; but, how vastly different from this was the design of the Apostles, who abhor'd those endless contentions which then were in the Heathen world, and came to shew them that Truth which was revealed with an intent of making them better men!*

We

§. 12. Wee lee the *Apostles* were not carried forth by any mean and vulgar motives, neither did they drive on any private ends of their own; all that they minded, was the promoting of the doctrine which they preached. Nay, they accounted no hazards comparable with the advantage which the world enjoyed through the propagation of the Christian Religion. This shewed a truly noble and generous spirit in them which would not be hindred from doing the World good, though they found so bad entertainment from it; yea, they rejoiced in their greatest sufferings which they underwent in so good a cause, wherein those Primitive Christians who were the genuine followers of the *Apostles*, did so far imitate them,

Tertul.

Apol. c. 46.

Minutius

Felix:

Tertul. Ap.

cap. 50.

Id. ib.

that, *etiam damnati gratias agunt*, they gave the Judges thanks that they thought them worthy to lose their lives in a cause which they had reason to triumph in, though they died for it. And, when any of them were apprehended, they discovered so little fear of punishment, *ut unum solummodo quod non ante fuerint puniret*, that nothing troubled them so much as that they had been Christians no sooner, as one of their number speaks. And, when the Heathens usually scoffed at them, and called them *Sarmenitii* and *Semex* because they were burned upon the Cross, one of them in the name of the rest answers, *hic est habitus victoria nostra, hic palmata vestis, tali carru triumphamus*; the Cross was only their triumphant Chariot which carried them sooner to Heaven. Now, this courage and resolution of spirit which was seen in the first planters of Christianity in the World, made all serious and inquisitive persons look more narrowly into those things, which made men slight so much the common bug-bears of humane Nature, sufferings and death.

Quis enim non contemplatione ejus concutitur, ad requirendum quid intus in re sit? quia non ubi requisivis accedit? ubi accessit pati exoptat? These sufferings made men enquire; the enquiry made them believe; that belief made them as willing to suffer themselves as they had seen others do it before them. Thus it appeared to be true in them, *exquisitor quaque delitans, illicebra magis est secta: plures efficiuntur quoties urtimur a vobis; semen est sanguis Christianorum*. The cruelty of their enemies did but increase their number; the harvest of their

their pretended justice was but the seed-time of Christianity, and no seed was so fruitful as that which was steeped in the blood of Martyrs. Thence *Justin Martyr* ingenuously saith of himself, that while he was a *Platonick Philosopher*, he derided and scoffed at the *Christians*; but, when he considered their great courage and constancy in dying for their profession, he could not think those could possibly be men wiskea and voluptuous, who when offers of life were made them, would rather choose death than deny *Christ*. By which he found plainly, that there was a higher spirit in Christianity than could be obtained by the sublime notions and speculations of *Plato*, and that a poor ignorant *Christian* would do and suffer more for the sake of *Christ* than any of the *Academy* in defence of their Master *Plato*. Now, since all men naturally abhor sufferings, what is it which should so powerfully alter the nature and disposition of *Christians* above all other persons, that they alone should seem in that to have forgot humanity, that not only with patience, but with joy they endured torments and abode the flames? What! were they all possessed with a far more than *Stoical Apathy*, that no sense of pain could work at all upon them? Or, were they all besotted and infatuated persons that did not know what it was they underwent? It is true, some of the more blind and wilful *Heathens* derided them as such; but, who were the more infatuated, let any sober person judge; they, who slighted and rejected a doctrine of so great concernment, which came attested with so much resolution and courage in the professors of it; or they, who were so far persuaded of the truth of it, that they would rather die than deny it? *dicimus Tertul. Ap. & palam dicimus, & vobis torquentibus lacerati & cruenti* cap. 24. *vaciferamur, Deum colimus per Christum.* They were not ashamed to believe in the blood of *Christ*, even when their own blood ran down before their eyes, and confess *Christ* with their mouths when their bodies were upon the rack. Certainly, then there were some very powerful and convincing arguments which buoyed up the spirits of true *Christians* in that deluge of sufferings which they were to swim through; it must be a strong and well-grounded faith which would hold out under so great trials, and they could not be to seek for

the most *persuasive motives* to faith, who were so ready to give an account to others of the hope that was in them, and to persuade all other persons to the embracing of it. With what face and confidence otherwise could they persuade men to embrace a doctrine so dangerous as that was, had there not been motives sufficient to bear up against the weight of sufferings, and arguments persuasive to convince them of the undoubted certainty of that Doctrine which they encouraged them to believe?

§. 13. Now, that which appears to have been the main ground of satisfaction to the Primitive Christians as to the truth and certainty of the doctrine of Christ, was this, that the doctrine of the Gospel was at first delivered to the world, by those persons who were themselves eye-witnesses of all the miracles which our Saviour wrought in confirmation of the truth of what he spoke. They were such persons who had been themselves present, not only to hear most of our Saviours admirable Discourses when he was in the world, but to see all those glorious things which were done by him, to make it appear that he was immediately sent from God. Let us now appeal to our own faculties, and examine a little what rational evidence could possibly be desired, that the doctrine of the Gospel was true, which God did not afford to the World? What could the persons who were the auditors of our Saviour desire more as an evidence that he came from God, than his doing such things which were certainly above any created power, either human or Diabolical, and therefore must needs be Divine? What could other persons desire more who were not presents at the doing of these miracles, but that the report of them should be conveyed to them in an undoubted manner by those persons who were eye-witnesses of them: and make it appear to the world that they were far from any intention of deceiving it? Now, this makes the Apostles themselves in their own writings (though they were divinely inspired) appeal to the rational evidence of the truth of the things, in that they were delivered by them who were eye-witnesses of them. There St. Peter speaks thus to the dispersed Jews,

ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἐκ σοφισμῶν καὶ λόγων ἀνθρώπων ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ ἰσχυροῦ τοῦ ἐνεργήσαντος ἐν ἡμῖν καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν
 a Pet. 1. 16, ἡμεῖς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δύναμιν καὶ παρουσίαν, καὶ ἐκ τῆς ἰσχυρῆς καὶ ἐνεργουμένης ἐν ἡμῖν καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν

μυηταις. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his Majesty. The power and coming of Christ which the Apostle speaks of, was not as some improbably conceive, either his general coming to judgement upon the world, or his particular coming upon the Nation of the Jews; but by an *Hendyades*, by his power and coming is meant his powerful appearance in the world, whereby he mightily discovered himself to be the Son of God. Now, this faith the Apostle, was not *μυηταις* μυστηριον, not like the Heathen Mythology concerning the *μυστικα* & *μυστικα* of their Gods among them (which were so frequently believed among them, that *Dionysius Halicarnassensis* condemns the *Epicureans*, because they did *Antiq. l. 2. pag 128.* deride *τὸς μυστικὰς τοῦ θεοῦ*, the appearances of their Gods in the world) now, saith the Apostle, assure your selves this is no such appearance of a God on earth as that among the Heathens was; for, saith he, we our selves who declare these things were *μυηταις*, we fully understand this *μυστικον* this great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, for we saw his *μακαριον*, that great majesty which attended him in all which he spake or did; we saw all those *μακαρια* τὰ θεου the great Acts 2. 11, things of God, which were manifest in him, all those miraculous operations which were wrought by him. Therefore, as this was a great confirmation of the faith of the Apostles themselves that they saw all these things, so we see it was of great concernment to the world in order to their belief that the Gospel was no cunningly devised fable, in that it was delivered by such who were *μυηταις* eye-witnesses of what they declared. To the same purpose St. John speaks *ad conciliandum fidem*, to make it appear how true what they delivered was, in the entrance of his Epistle: That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us) That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you. We see what great force and weight the Apostle layes upon this,

¹ John 1.
2, 3.

this, that they delivered nothing but what they had *seen* and *heard*; as they heard the doctrine of Christ, so they saw the miracles which he wrought in confirmation of it. St. Luke likewise in the beginning of his Gospel declares, that he intended to write nothing but what he had perfect understanding

Luke 1. 1, *ing* of from such persons who had been *αὐτῶν* eye-witnesses,
2. 3, and instruments themselves in part of what was written, for that is meant by *ὡς ἵδοντες*: and those things which were written, he saith were *πῶς ἠρροφηθήσα ἐν ἡμῖν πλείονα ματῶν*, things which are abundantly proved to be true; for, being matters of fact, there could be no stronger proof of them, than by such who were eye-witnesses of what they spake. And, this we find the Apostles themselves very cautious about, in the choice

Acts 1. 21, of a new Apostle in the room of Judas. Wherefore of these
22, men which have companied with us, all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John unto that same day, that he was taken from us, may one be ordained to be a witness of his Resurrection: For, because Christ was mightily declared to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead, (as that which was the great Seal of our Saviours being the Son of God) therefore, we find the Apostles so frequently attesting the truth of the resurrection of Christ, and that themselves were eye-witnesses of it. The

Acts 2. 31, Jesus, saith Peter, hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. And again, And killed the Prince of life, whom

9. 15. God hath raised up from the dead, whereof we are witnesses; and both Peter and John to the Sanhedrin; For, we cannot

4. 20. but speak the things which we have seen and heard. And the whole Colledge of Apostles afterwards; And we are his witnesses

5. 32. of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. In which words, they give

them that twofold rational evidence: which did manifest the undoubted truth of what they spake; for, they delivered nothing but what themselves were witnesses of, and which was declared to be true by the power of the Holy Ghost in the miracles which were wrought by and upon Believers. Afterwards we read the sum of the Apostles Preaching, and the manner used by them to persuade men of the truth of it, in the words of Peter to Cornelius and his company, How God

anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil, for God was with him: And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even us who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. By all which we see what care God was pleased to take for the satisfaction of the world in point of rational evidence, as to the truth of the matters which were discovered concerning our Saviour Christ, because he made choice of such persons to be the preachers and writers of these things who were the best able to satisfy the world about them, viz. such as had been eye-witnesses of them.

10:39, 40;
41; 42.

Now in order to the making it more fully evident what strength there was in this Testimony given by the Apostle to the miracles of Christ, we shall more fully manifest the rational evidence which attended it in these following Propositions. Where the truth of a Doctrine depends upon a matter of fact, the truth of the Doctrine is sufficiently manifested, if the matter of fact be evidently proved in the highest way it is capable of. Thus it is in reference to the doctrine of Christ; for, the truth of that is so interwoven with the truth of the story of Christ, that if the relations concerning Christ be true, his Doctrine must needs be Divine and Infallible. For, if it be undoubtedly true, that there was such a person as Christ born at Bethlehem, who did so many miracles, and at last suffered the death of the Cross, and after he had lain three days in the grave rose again from the dead, what reason imaginable can I have to question, but that the Testimony of this person was certainly Divine; and consequently, whatever he preached to the World was most certain and undoubted truth. So, that if we have clear evidence as to the truth of these passages concerning our Saviour, we must likewise believe his Doctrine, which came attested with such pregnant evidence of a Divine Commission which he had from God to the world.

§. 14.

Prop. 1.

No Prince can think he hath any reason to refuse audience to an Embassador, when he finds his *Credentials* such as he may rely upon although himself doth not see the sealing of them; much less reason have we to question the truth of the doctrine of the Gospel, if we have sufficient evidence of the truth of the matters of fact concerning Christ, in such a way as those things are capable of being proved.

Prop. 2.

The greatest evidence which can be given to a matter of fact, is the attesting of it by those persons who were eye-witnesses of it. This is the Foundation whereon the firmest assent is built, as to any matter of fact, for, although we conceive we have reason to suspect the truth of a story, as long as it is conveyed only in a general way, by an uncertain fame and tradition, yet, when it comes to be attested by a sufficient number of credible persons who profess themselves the eye-witnesses of it, it is accounted an unreasonable thing to distrust any longer the truth of it, especially in these two cases: 1. When the matter they bear witness to is a thing which they might easily and clearly perceive. 2. When many witnesses exactly agree in the same Testimony.

1. When the matter its self is of that nature that it may be fully perceived by those who saw it: i.e. if it be a common object of sense. And thus it certainly was, as to the person and actions of Jesus Christ. For, he was of the same nature with mankind, and they had as great evidence that they conversed with Jesus Christ in the flesh, as we can have that we converse one with another. The miracles of Christ were real and visible miracles, they could be no illusions of senses, nor deceits of their eyes; the man who was born blind and cured by our Saviour, was known to have been born blind through all the Country, and his cure was after as publick as his blindness before, and acknowledged by the greatest enemies of Christ at the time of its being done. When Christ raised up the dead man at Naim, it was before much people, and such persons in probability who were many of them present at his death. But, lest there might be any suspicion as to him, that he was not really dead, the case is plain and beyond all dispute in Lazarus, who had been to the knowledge of all persons thereabouts dead four days; here could be no deceit at all when

Joh. 9. 16.

Luke 7. 12.

Joh. 11. 39

when the stone was rolled away, and Lazarus came forth in the presence of them all. And yet further, the death and passion of our Saviour was a plain object of sense done in presence of his greatest adversaries: The soldiers themselves were sufficient witnesses of his being really dead when they came to break his bones, and spared him because they saw he was dead already. At his Resurrection the stone was rolled away from the Sepulchre and no body found therein, although the Sepulchre was guarded by soldiers, and the Disciples of Christ all so fearful, that they were dispersed up and down in several places. And, that it was the same real body, which he rose withall, and no æreal vehicle, appears by Thomas his scrupulosity and unbelief, who would not believe unless he might put his hands into the hole of his sides, and see in his hands the print of the nails; now, our Saviour condescending so far as to satisfy the incredulity of Thomas, hath made it thereby evident, that the body which our Saviour rose from the grave with, was the same individual body which before was crucified and buried in the Sepulchre. And, we find all the Apostles together upon our Saviours appearance to them after his resurrection, so far from being credulous in embracing a phantasm instead of Christ, that they suspected that it was either a meer phantasm, or an evil spirit which appeared among them; upon which it is said, they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit. Which our Saviour could not beat them off from, but by appealing to the judgement of their senses, *Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have*, and afterwards more fully to convince them, *he did eat in the midst of them*. Now, the more suspicious and incredulous the Apostles themselves at first were, the greater evidence is it how far they were from any design of abusing the world in what they after preached unto it, and what strong conviction there was in the thing its self, which was able to satisfy such scrupulous and suspicious persons.

2. When many witnesses concur in the same Testimony. Nothing can disprove more the truth of a Testimony, than the contrary witness of such who were present at the same actions; but, when all the witnesses fully agree not only in the substance

John 20.

25, 27.

Luke 24.

37.

39.

43.

substance, but in all material circumstances of the story, what ground or reason can there be to suspect a forgery or design in it ; especially when the persons cannot by any fears or threatenings be brought to vary from each other in it ! Thus it was in our present case, we find no real dissent at all mentioned either as to the birth, miracles, life, death, or resurrection of Jesus Christ ; all the witnesses attest the same things, though writing in different places, and upon different occasions ; no alteration in any circumstance of the story, out of any design of pleasing or gratifying any persons by it. Most of our Saviours miracles, not only his Apostles but the people and his very enemies were witnesses of, whose posterity to this day dare not deny the truth of such strange works which were wrought by him. And for his Resurrection, it would be very strange, that five hundred persons should all agree in the same thing, and that no torments or death could bring any of them to deny the truth of it, had there not been the greatest certainty in it.

§. 15.
Prop. 3.

There can be no reason to suspect such a Testimony which is given by eye witnesses, but either from questioning their knowledge of the things they speak of, or their fidelity in reporting them. Now, there is not the least ground to doubt either of these, in reference to those persons who gave testimony to the world concerning the person and actions of our blessed Saviour.

I.

For first, They were such as were intimately conversant both with the person and actions of Jesus Christ ; whom he had chosen and trained up for that very end, that they might be sufficiently qualified to acquaint the world with the truth of things concerning himself after his resurrection from the dead. And accordingly, they followed him up and down wheresoever he went, they were with him in his solitudes and retirements, and had thereby occasion to observe all his actions, and to take notice of the unspotted innocency of his life. Some of his Disciples were with him in his Transfiguration, others in his Agony and bloody sweat, they heard the expressions which came from his mouth ; in all which he discovered a wonderful submission to the will of God, and a great readiness of mind to suffer for the good of the world. Now therefore, the first thing

thing cannot at all be questioned, *their means of knowing the truth of what they spake.*

Neither secondly is there any reason to suspect their fidelity in reporting what they knew: For 1. *The truth of this doctrine wrought so far upon them, that they parted with all their worldly subsistence for the sake of it:* Although their riches were not great, yet their way of subsistence in the world was necessary; they left their houses, their wives and children, and all for Christ, and that not to gain any higher preferments in this world (which had they done, it would have rendered their design suspicious to the curious and inquisitive world) but they let go at least a quiet and easie life, for one most troublesome and dangerous. So that it is not, how much they parted withal, but how freely they did it, and with what cheerfulness they underwent disgraces, persecutions, nay death its self for the sake of the Gospel. Now can it be imagined, that ever men were so prodigal of their ease and lives, as to throw both of them away upon a thing which themselves were not fully assured of the truth of? It had been the highest folly imaginable, to have deceived themselves in a thing of so great moment to them, as the truth of the doctrine which they preached was; because all their hopes and happiness depended on the truth of that doctrine which they preached. And as Tertullian observes, *non fac est ulli de sua religione mentiri*; for, saith he, *he that sayes he worships any thing besides what he doth, he denies what he doth worship, and transfers his worship upon another, and thereby doth not worship that which he thus denies*; Besides, what probability is there men should lye for the sake of that Religion which tells them that those which do so shall not receive the reward which is promised to those who cordially adhere unto it. Nay, they declare themselves to be the most miserable of all persons 1 Cor. 15. if their hopes were only in this present life. Can we now think that any who had the common reason of men, would part with all the contentments of this world, and expose themselves to continual hazards, and at last undergo death its self for the sake of something which was meerly the fiction of their own brains? What should make them so sedulous and industrious in preaching such things that they could say necessity

2.

1.

1 Cor. 15.

19.

1 Cor. 9. *was laid upon them, yea wo was unto them if they preached not*
 16. *Gospel, when yet they saw so many woes attending them in*
the preaching of it, had there not been some more powerful
attractive in the beauty and excellency of the doctrine which
they preached, then any could be in the ease and tranquillity
of this present world? Thus we see the fidelity of the Apostles
manifested in such a way as no other witnesses were ever yet
willing to hazard theirs. And therefore Origen deservedly
 163. c. Cel- *condemns Celsus of a ridiculous impertinency, when he would*
 sum p. 127. *parallel the relations of Herodotus and Pindarus concerning*
Aristeus Proconessus with those of the Apostles concerning
Christ: For, saith he, did either of these two venture their
lives upon the truth of what they writ concerning him, as the
Apostles did to attest the truth of what they preached concern-
ing our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?

§. 16.

2. The fidelity of the Apostles is evident in their manner of reporting the things which they deliver. For if ever there may be any thing gathered from the manner of expression, or the τὸ ὅτι τὸ λόγος concerning the particular temper and disposition of the person from whom it comes; we may certainly read the greatest fidelity in the Apostles from the peculiar manner of their expressing themselves to the world. Which they do,

1. With the greatest impartiality: not declaring only what was glorious and admirable to the world, but what they knew would be accounted foolishness by it. They who had sought only to have been admired for the rare discoveries which they brought to the world, would be sure to conceal any thing which might be accounted ridiculous; but the Apostles fixed themselves most on what was most contemptible in the eyes of the world, and what they were most mocked and derided for, that they delighted most in the preaching of, which was the Cross of Christ. Paul was so much in Love with this, which was a stumbling block to the Jews, and foolishness to the Greeks, that he valued the knowledge of nothing else in comparison of the knowledge of Christ and him crucified. Nay he elsewhere saith, God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of Christ. What now should be the reason that they should rejoice in that most which was most despicable to the world,

1 Cor. 1. 2.

Phil. 3. 8.

Gal. 6. 14.

world, had not they seen far greater truth and excellency in it, than in the most sublime speculations concerning God or the souls of men in the School of Plato or any other heathen Philosophers? That all men should be bound in order to their salvation, to believe in one who was crucified at Hierusalem, was a strange doctrine to the unbelieving world: but if the Apostles had but endeavoured to have suited their doctrine to the School of Plato, what rare persons might they have been accounted among the Heathen Philosophers! Had they only in general terms discoursed of the Benignity of the Divine nature, and the manifestations of Divine goodness in the world, and that, in order to the bringing of the souls of men to a nearer participation of the Divine nature, the perfect Idea of true goodness, and the express image of the person of God, and the resplendency of his glory had veiled himself in humane nature, and had everywhere scattered such beams of light and goodness, as warmed and invigorated the frozen spirits of men with higher sentiments of God and themselves, and raised them up above the faculty of this terrestrial matter to breathe in a freer air, and converse with more noble objects, and by degrees to fit the souls of men for those more pure illapses of real goodness, which might always satisfy the souls desires, and yet always keep them up till the soul should be sunning it self to all eternity under the immediate beams of Light and Love: And that after this Incarnate Deity had spread abroad the wings of his Love for a while upon this lower world, till by his gentle heat and incubation he had quickned the more pliable world to some degree of a Divine life, he then retreated himself back again into the superiour world, and put off that veil by which he made himself known to those who are here confined to the prisons of their bodies: Thus, I say, had the Apostles minded applause among the admired Philosophers of the Heathens, how easy had it been for them to have made some considerable additions to their highest speculations, and have left out any thing which might seem so mean and contemptible as the death of the Son of God! But this they were so far from, that the main thing which they preached to the world, was, the vanity of humane wisdom without Christ, and the

necessity of all mens believing in that *Jesus* who was crucified at *Hiernsalem*.

The *Apostles* indeed discover very much, infinitely more then ever the most lofty *Platonist* could do, concerning the goodness and Love of God to mankind; but that wherein they manifested the Love of God to the world, was that he gave us only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. And that herein was the Love of God manifested, that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. And that this was the greatest truth and worthy of all acceptance, that *Jesus Christ* came into the world to save sinners. They never dreamt of any divine goodness which should make men happy without Christ: No, it was their design to perswade the world that all the communications of Gods goodness to the world were wholly in and through *Jesus Christ*, and it is impossible that any should think otherwise, unless *Plato* knew more of the mind of God then our blessed Saviour, and *Plotinus* then Saint Paul. Can we think now that the *Apostles* should hazard the reputation of their own wits so much as they did to the world, and be accounted babblers, and fools, and madmen for preaching the way of salvation to be only by a person crucified between two thieves at *Hiernsalem*, had they not been convinced not only of the truth but importance of it, and that it concerned men as much to believe it, as it did to avoid eternal misery? Did Saint Paul preach ever the less the words of truth and soberness, because he was told to his face, that his Learning had made him mad? but if he was besides himself, it was for Christ: and what wonder was it if the Love of Christ in the *Apostle* should make him willing to lose his reputation for him, seeing Christ made himself of no reputation, that he might be in a capacity to do us good? We see the *Apostles* were not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, because they knew it was the power of God to salvation, and therefore neither in their preaching or their writings would they omit any of those passages concerning our Saviours death, which might be accounted the most dishonourable to his person. Which is certainly as great an evidence of their fidelity as can be expected; which makes *Origen* say, that the Disciples of Christ writ all things

things *ἐκκαλύπτει καὶ ἀποκαλύπτει* with a great deal of candour and L. 3. a love of truth. *ἐκκαλύπτει τὰς ἀρετὰς αὐτοῦ παραδίδει ἰστορίας τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ τῶν πολλοῖς αἰσθῆναι τῷ λόγῳ καὶ χεριστῶν εἶναι*; not concealing from the world those passages of the life of Christ, which would be accounted most foolish and ridiculous.

2. With the greatest plainness and simplicity of speech. Such whose design is to impose upon the minds of men with some cunningly devised fables, love as much ambiguity as ever Apollo did in his most winding Oracles, of whom it is laid,

*Ambage nexa Delphico mos est Deo
Arcana tegere.*

Servius tells us, that Jupiter Ammon was therefore pictured ^{in 4. A.} with Rams horns, because his answers had as many turnings need. and windings as they had. But the horns which Moses was wont to be pictured with, did only note light and perspicuity (from the ambiguity of *Π* which notes the sending forth of rays of light like a horn) and yet Moses himself was veiled, in comparison of the openness and plainness of speech which was in the Apostles. Impostors cast a mist of many dark and cloudy words before them, but when they are once brought into the open light, their vizard falls off, and their deformity appears. Such persons delight in soaring quite out of the apprehensions of those who follow them, and never think themselves better recompenced for their pains, then when they are most admired and least understood. But never was Christianity more dishonoured, then when men brought it from its native simplicity and plainness, into a company of cloudy and insignificant expressions, which are so far from making men better understand the truth of it, that it was certainly the Devils design by such obscure terms to make way for a mystery to be advanced (but it was of iniquity) and soon after, we see the effect of it in another oracle set up at Rome instead of Delphus, and all the pretence of it, was the obscurity supposed in Scripture. What! darkness come by the rising of the Sun! Or is the Sun at last grown so beggarly, that he is fain to borrow light of the earth? Must

the Scripture be beholding to the Church for its clearness, and Christ himself not speak intelligibly, unless the Pope be his Interpreter? Did Christ reveal to the world the way to salvation, and yet leave men to seek which was it, till a Guide never heard of in the Scripture come to direct them in the way to it? What strange Witnesses were the Apostles, if they did not speak the truth with plainness? How had men been to seek as to the truth of Christianity, if the Apostles had not declared the doctrine of the Gospel with all evidence and perspicuity? Whom must we believe in this case, the Apostles or the Roman Oracle? The Apostles they tell us they speak
 2 Cor. 3. 12. with all plainness of speech, and for that end purposely lay
 1 Cor. 2. aside all excellency of words and humane wisdom, that men
 1 Cor. 4. 1, 4. might not be to seek for their meaning in a matter of so
 3, 4. great moment; that the Gospel was hid to none but such as are
 lost, and whose eyes are blinded by the god of this world; that the doctrine revealed by them is a light to direct us in our way to heaven, and a rule to walk by: and it is a strange property of light to be obscure, and of a rule to be crooked. But it is not only evident from the Apostles own affirmations, that they laid aside all affected obscurity, ambiguous expressions, and Philosophical terms, whereby the world might have been to seek for what they were to believe, but it is likewise clear from the very nature of the doctrine they preached, and the design of their preaching of it. What need Rhetorick in plain truths? or affected phrases in giving evidence? How incongruous would obscure expressions have been to the design of saving souls by the foolishness of preaching? For if they had industriously spoken in their preaching, above the capacities of those they spake to, they could never have converted a soul without a miracle; for the ordinary way of conversion must be by the understanding; and how could that work upon the understanding, which was so much above it? But saith the Apostle, we preach not our selves, but Christ Jesus the Lord,
 2 Cor. 4. 5. and our selves your servants for Jesus sake. If they had sought themselves or their own credit and reputation, there might have been some reason that they should have used the way of the Sophists among the Greeks, and by declamatory speeches to have enhanced their esteem among the vulgar. But the

the *Apostles* disowned and rejected all these vulgar artifices of mean and low-spirited men; they laid aside all those enticing words *αἰσχροὶν ὁμιλίαν* of the way of the Heathen Sophists, 1 Cor. 2. 4. and declared the Testimony of God with spiritual evidence; they handled not the word of God deceitfully, but by manifest- 2 Cor. 4. 2. ation of the truth, commended themselves to every mans conscience in the sight of God: Now what could be so suitable to such a design, as the greatest plainness and faithfulness in what they spake? We find in the testimony of the *Apostles* *οὐδὲ ῥήθεν καὶ ὑποκρινόμενοι καὶ πλάσσειν καὶ παύειν*, as *Orig. c. Cels.* 13. p. 135. gen speaks, nothing that is spurious or counterfeit, nothing swaring of the cunning craftiness of such as lie in wait to deceive; and saith he, it is impossible to think that men never bred up in the Sophistry of the Greeks, nor experienced in the Rhetorical insinuations used among them, could ever be able so suddenly to persuade the world to embrace that which had been a figment of their own brains. The truth is, the *Apostles* speak like men very confident of the truth of what they speak, and not like such who were fain to fetch in the help of all their Topics, to find out some probable arguments to make men believe that which it is probable they did not believe themselves, which was most commonly the case of the great Orators among the Heathens. We find no pedantsick flourishes, no flattering insinuations, no affected cadencies, no such great care of the rising and falling of words in the several sentences, which make up so great a part of that which was accounted eloquence in the *Apostles* times. These things were too mean a prey for the spirits of the *Apostles* to quarry upon: every thing in them was grave and serious, every word had its due weight, every sentence brimful of spiritual matter, their whole discourse most becoming the Majesty and Authority of that spirit which they spake by. And therein was seen a great part of the infinite wisdom of God in the choice he made of the persons who were to propagate the Doctrine of Christ in the world, that they were not such who by reason of their great repute and fame in the world, might easily draw whole multitudes to embrace their dictates, but (that there might not be the least foundation for an implicit faith) they were of so mean rank and condition in the world, that in all probability

C. Celsus
l. 3.

Probability their names had never been heard of, had not their doctrine made them famous. To this purpose *Origen* excellently speaks, *ὁμοίᾳ δὲ καὶ τῇ Ἰησοῦν διὰ τοῦ βιβλικῆς διδασκαλίας διδόντος τοῖς μαθηταῖς καὶ τοῖς ἑτέροις τοῖς ἀκούουσιν, ἵνα μηδεμίαν αὐτῶν ἔχη χάριν ἰσότητος πιδανῶν σοφισμάτων· λαμπρῶς δὲ πῶς συνέβαινε διὰ τῶν μαθητῶν, ὅτι τὸ ἀδελφὸν πᾶσι σεβαστέως ἦν χαρίζοντο, ἐχέοντες πολὺν ἀφελῆν, ἡγεῖσθαι διειστέρας δυνάμεις, πολλὰ μᾶλλον αὐτοῖς, ἢ πρὸς αὐτοὺς διδόντες δοκῆσαι ἀφελῆν λόγων, καὶ ἀξίαν συνέσεως, καὶ μετὰ διειστέων καὶ τεχνολογίας Εὐαγγελικῆς ακολουθία. I am of opinion, saith he, that *Jesus* did purposely make use of such preachers of his doctrine, that there might be no place for suspicion that they came instructed with the arts of Sophistry; but that it is clearly manifest to all that would consider it, that there was nothing of design in those who discovered so much simplicity in their writings, and that they had a more divine power which was more efficacious then the greatest volubility of expressions, or ornaments of speech, or the artifices which were used in the Grecian compositions.*

3. The Apostles delivered their doctrine with the greatest openness and freedom of spirit; they did not give out one thing to the world, and another to their private Disciples; but with great freedom and boldness declared their doctrine in the most publick places, and before their greatest enemies. They knew they were looked on as deceivers by the world, but yet they knew themselves to be true, *ὡς πλάνοι καὶ ἀληθεῖς*. This is the usual requital good men have from the world, that they are looked on as the greatest deceivers of it; if it be so with others, they have much less cause to wonder at it, when even he, who by one Prophet is styled the desire of Nations, is by another said to be despised and rejected of men; and when *Christ* was in the world he was called ὁ πᾶν, the deceiver; no wonder, then if his Disciples were accounted such, although they manifested their veracity by their open carriage and free speaking to the faces of their greatest adversaries. The Apostles neither feared the Jews skill in their Law, nor the wisdom and subtilty of the Greeks: Saint Paul preacheth *Christ* openly among the Jews in their Synagogues, and among the Athenians he encounters the Epicureans and Stoicks, and preacheth to them *Jesus* and the resurrection.

If the *Apostles* had any thing of *deceivers* in them, as to the things they related concerning *Christ*, they would not certainly have spoken with so much confidence concerning *Christ* in the presence of those who had been his murderers, but we see they appealed to themselves, as to the miracles which he had wrought among them, and for his resurrection they were ready to lay down their lives in giving testimony to the truth of it. That his body was gone, was evident; that the *Apostles* should take it away was impossible, considering what a guard of soldiers they had set upon it, and how timorous and fearful the *Apostles* were, that they fled upon *Christ's* being apprehended. Now what could it be, could make such fearful persons afterwards so courageous and resolute as they were, had there not been some more than ordinary power to convince and encourage them?

4 The *Apostles* deliver their Testimony with the greatest particularity as to all circumstances. They do not change or alter any of them upon different examinations before several persons; they all agree in the greatest constancy to themselves and uniformity with each other. As to matters of indifference, we find the *Apostles* very yielding and condescending, but as to any thing which concerned their testimony, most constant and resolved. Had the Gospel been some cunningly contrived fancy, it had been impossible but so many different persons, in such different places, and under such different conditions, would have varied as to some material circumstance of it: Or else they would have been so wise as to have delivered it in general terms, without insisting much on such particular circumstances, which if they had been false, might have been very easily disproved: but with what particular enumeration of circumstances do the *Apostles* preach *Christ* to the world? *Peter* tells the *Jews* that it was *Jesus* Acts 2. 22. of Nazareth whom he preached; and lest they should think it was not the same person who rose again; with great boldness and freedom of spirit he saith to them, Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God had made that same *Jesus* whom ye have crucified, both Lord and *Christ*. Yea, that same individual person who was conversant in the world, and died upon the Cross, is now become a Prince and Saviour to

2. 36.

5. 31. 32.

give repentance to Israel and remission of sins. If there had been any ground of suspicion as to these things, who had been so able to disprove them, or so ready to do it, as those persons who had crucified him? For we cannot conceive but those who had a hand in his death, would endeavour by all possible means to disprove his resurrection from the dead. For what a case were they like to be in, if those things which the Apostles so confidently preached were true? If Christ had all power now in his hands, and there were salvation in no other name, but only in his whom they had crucified, they were like to be in a most desperate condition; therefore if any men can be supposed inquisitive after the truth of these circumstances, no doubt these were; and if they could have found the least flaw in their testimony, the world would soon have rung of it; and the Jews who were then so much dispersed abroad, would have divulged it into all parts, the Apostles would have been told of it as they preached Christ in the Synagogues. And can we in any reason think, but those Jews who persecuted Paul as he preached in the Synagogues of Asia, and afterwards impeached him so openly at Jerusalem, would there enquire into all the circumstances concerning Christ, and all the other Jews would write to their Friends at Jerusalem to be fully informed of those strange things which were told them openly in all places in their Synagogues by men of their own Nation and language, concerning one Jesus who was crucified and rose again from the dead. Had there been now any so much as plausible pretext that any of these circumstances were not true, can we think but that a people so unmeasurably given to their own ways and traditions, would in all places have vented any thing that might have tended to the disparagement of Christ and his Apostles? But we see malice its self could not find any flaw in the Apostles testimony; for if it had, we should certainly have heard of it, either from the Jews, or from the great opposers of Christianity among the Heathens, who pretended to be curious and inquisitive persons, such as Celsus, Julian, Hierocles, and Porphyrie were. What reason can we have then in the least to suspect such a Testimony which passed so uncontrouled in that time when it was alone capable of being disproved,

disproved, and mens interest and design would put them so much upon it? The strength of which will appear from the next proposition, which is,

No Testimony ought to be taken against a matter of fact thus §. 17.
attested, but from such persons who had greater knowledge of Prop. 4.
the things attested, and manifest greater fidelity in reporting them.

It is easie to make it appear, that supposing any persons at that time had contradicted the Testimony of the Apostles concerning our Saviour, yet there had been no reason in the world to have hearkned to their Testimony in opposition to that of the Apostles; and that on these accounts.

1. The Apostles witnessed the Affirmative, which is more capable of being attested then any negative can be. 2. The Apostles were more conversant with Christ then any other persons were, because they were chosen for that very end by him to be constantly with him; could any therefore be more capable of knowing the truth of all particulars concerning Christ then these were? Had there been any ground of suspicion concerning the design of Christ: why could not the Jews prevail with Judas to discover it as well as to betray his person? Judas had done but a good work if Christ had been such an impostor as the Jews blasphemously said he was; what made Judas then so little satisfied with his work, that he grew weary of his life upon it; and threw himself away in the most horrid despair? No person certainly had been so fit to have been produced as a witness against Christ, as Judas who had been so long with him, and had heard his speeches and observed his miracles; but he had not patience enough to stay after that horrid fact to be a witness against him; nay, he was the greatest witness at that time for him, when he who had betrayed him came to the Sanhedrim when consulting about his death, and told them that he had sinned in betraying innocent blood. What possible evidence could have been given more in behalf of our Saviour then that was? when a person so covetous as to betray his Master for thirty pieces of silver, was so weary of his bargain, that he comes and throws back the money, and declares the person innocent whom he had betrayed? And this person too was such a one as knew our Saviour far better then any of the

Mar. 17. 5.

witnesses whom afterwards they suborned against him, who yet contradicted each other, and at last could produce nothing which in the judgement of the Heathen Governour could make him judge Christ worthy of death. 3. The Apostles were freer from design than any counter-witness at that time could be; we have already proved the Apostles could not possibly have any other motive to affirm what they did but full conviction of the truth of what they spake; but now if any among the Jews at that time had asserted any thing contrary to the Apostles, we have a clear account of it, and what motive might induce them to it; viz. the preserving of their honour and reputation with the people, the upholding their traditions, besides their open and declared enmity against Christ without any sufficient reason at all for it: now who would believe the Testimony of the Scribes and Pharisees who had so great authority among the people, which they were like to lose, if Christs doctrine were true, before that of the Apostles who parted with all for the sake of Christ, and ventured themselves wholly upon the truth of our Saviours doctrine? 4. None ever did so much to attest the negative as the Apostles did to prove their fidelity as to the affirmative. Had sufficient counter-witness been timely produced, we cannot think the Apostles would have run so many continual hazards in Preaching the things which related to the person and actions of Christ. Did ever any lay down their lives to undeceive the world, if the Apostles were guilty of abusing it? 5. The number of such persons had been inconsiderable in comparison of those who were so fully persuaded of the truth of those things which concern our Saviour; who were all ready (as most of them did) to seal the truth of them with their lives. Whence should so many men grow so suddenly confident of the truth of such things which were contrary to their former persuasions, interest, education, had they not been delivered in such a way, that they were assured of the undoubted truth of them? which brings me to the last proposition, which is,

§. 18. Matters of fact being first believed on the account of eye-witnesses, and received with an universal and uncontroul'd assent by all such persons who have thought themselves concern-

ed in knowing the truth of them, do yield a sufficient foundation for a firm assent to be built upon. I take it for granted that there is sufficient foundation for a firm assent, where there can be no reason given to question the evidence: which that there is not in this present case will appear from these following considerations.

1. *That the multitudes of those persons who did believe these things, had liberty and opportunity to be satisfied of the truth of them before they believed them.* Therefore no reason or motive can be assigned, on which they should be induced to believe these things, but the undoubted evidence of truth which went along with them. I confess in *Mahometisme* a very great number of persons have for some centuries of years continued in the belief of the doctrine of *Mahomet*; but then withall there is a sufficient account to be given of that, viz. the power of the sword which keeps them in aw, and strictly forbids all the followers of *Mahomet* to dispute their religion at all, or compare it with any other. Therefore I can no more wonder at this, then I do to see so great a part of the world under the Tyranny of the great Turk: Neither on the other side do I wonder that such a multitude of those professing Christianity should together with it, believe a great number of erroneous doctrines, and live in the practice of many gross superstitions, because I consider what a strange prevalency education hath upon softer spirits and more easie intellectuals, and what an aw an Inquisition bears upon timorous and irresolved persons. But now when a great multitude of persons sober and inquisitive shall contrary to the principles of their education, and without fear of any humane force, (which they beforehand see will persecute them) and after diligent enquiry made into the grounds on which they believe, forsake all their former persuasions, and resolvedly adhere to the truth of the doctrine propounded to them, though it cost them their lives; if this give us not reason to think this doctrine true, we must believe mankind to be the most miserable unhappy creatures in the world: that will with so much resolution part with all advantages of this life for the sake of one to come, if that be not undoubtedly certain, and the doctrine proposing it infallibly true. It is an

observable circumstance in the propagation of Christian Religion, that though God made choice at first of persons generally of mean rank and condition in the world to be Preachers of the Gospel, God thereby making it appear that
 1 Cor. 2. 5. our faith did not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of
 1 Cor. 1. God, and therefore chose the weak things of the world to con-
 27. found the strong; yet soon after the Gospel was preached abroad in the world, we find persons of great place and reputation, of great parts and abilities engaged in the profession of the Christian faith. In the History of the Acts we read of Sergius a Proconsul, of Dionysius the Areopagite converted to the faith, and the following ages of the Church many persons of great esteem for their excellent learning and abilities; such was Justin Martyr, one who before he became a Christian, was conversant with all sects of Philosophers, Stoicks, Peripateticks, Pythagoreans, and at last was a professed Platonist till he was converted from Plato to Christ, and then found that true which he speaks of in his Dialogue with Trypho, that after all his enquiries into Philosophy, speaking of the doctrine of Christ, ταῦτα μόνον ἐνεστέον φιλοσοφίας ἀσφαλὲς τὴν καὶ σὺμφορὰν, I found this at last to be the only sure and profitable Philosophy. And when Trypho after derides him as a man of very easy faith, who would leave the doctrine of Plato for that of Christ, (for it seems by him the Jews then had a more favourable opinion of the state of Platonists than Christians,) Justin is so far from being moved with such reproaches, that he tells him he would undertake to demonstrate to him ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμπροσθεν μῦθος, ἀλλ' ἀπαμειβίταις λόγοις, ἀλλὰ μεσὸς πνεύματος τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ δυναμὸς βεβαιῶν, καὶ τεχνολογία ἁπλῆ, that the Christians did not give credit to empty fables, and unprovable assertions, but to such a doctrine as was full of a Divine spirit and power, and flourished with grace; The proving of which is the subject of that discourse. At Alexandria we meet with a succession of excellent persons, all which were not only embracers themselves, but defenders of the Christian faith: for setting aside there Abilius, Justin, Cerdo, Eumenes, Marcus, Celadion, Agrippinus, Julianus, Demetrius and others who flourished about the second Century, I shall only fix on those persons who were famous enquirers

Dialog. cum
 Trypho. p.
 125. ed.
 Pat.

enquires after truth and noted for excellency in *Heathen learning*; yet these persons after all their inquiries found nothing to fix on but the *Christian faith*, and valued no other discovery of truth in comparison with that. Such was *Pantannus*, who as *Eusebius* tells us, was an excellent *Stoick* before he became a *Christian*, and was after so eminent a one, that in imitation of the *Apostles* he went into *India* to convert the inhabitants to the *Christian faith*, and at his return was made *Reſtor* of the *School* at *Alexandria*; which as the *Hiſt. Eccl.* ſame author tells us, was much frequented by ſuch who were *15. c. 10.* *ἐν λόγῳ καὶ τῷ αἰεὶ τὸ δῶτα σπουδὴν διδασκῶν*, well ſkil'd in humane as well as Divine learning. How excellent *Pantannus* was in *Euseb. l. 6.* humane learning may appear in that *Origen* and *Hierome* both *6. 10.* make his example their plea for the ſtudying of it. After him ſucceeded *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Pantannus* his Schollar, a perſon of great depth of learning and exquisitely ſkil'd in all *Heathen Antiquities*, as appears by his remaining writings. The Learning of *Origen* is ſufficiently known, which was in ſuch great reputation in his own time, that not only *Chriſti* *Hiſt. l. 6.* *ans* but *Philophers* flock'd to his Lectures at *Alexandria* as *6. 18.* *Eusebius* tells us, wherein he read the *Mathematicks*, and other parts of *Philophy* as well as the *Scriptures*; and the ſame author informs us that the *Philophers* did dedicate their books to him, and ſometimes choſe him as arbitrator between them in matters of diſpute: and *Porphyrus* himſelf in his books againſt the *Chriſtians* vouchſafed a high encomium of *Origen* for his excellent learning. In *Origen's* time *Heraclius* a *Preſbyter* of *Alexandria* for five years together frequented the *Schools* of the *Philophers*, and put on the *Philophick pallium*, *εἰς βίβια τε ἑλληνικὰ καὶ κατὰ δὲκα μὲν καὶ παύει φιλολόγων*; and *Euseb. l. 6.* *was* very converſant in the books of the *Grecian Learning*. *cap. 20.* Beſides theſe we read of *Pierius* and *Achillas* two *Preſbyters* of *Alexandria* who were *τῶ κατὰ ἑλλήνας μουſικῇ καὶ εἰς ἑκαστὴν* *Hiſt. Eccl.* *ἀντιστοιχούντων* as *Nicephorus Calliſtus* ſpeaks, perſons well *l. 6. c. 35.* ſkil'd in the *Grecian learning* and *Philophy*. If from *Alexandria* we go to *Caeſarea*, there we not only meet with a *School* of learning among the *Chriſtians*, but with perſons very eminent in all kinds of learning: ſuch were the famous *Pamphilus* and *Eusebius* ſo great an admirer of him, that ever

ever since he is called *Eusebius Pamphili*. At *Antioch* was *Dorotheus* ἀδελφὸς τῶν πᾶσι λόγων καὶ μουσικῆς ἀνδρὶς, as *Nicephorus* speaks, a person versed in all kind of ingenious literature. *Anatolius* Bishop of *Laodicea* one versed in *Geometry*, *Astronomy*, and all kind of *Philosophy* as well as in the doctrine of *Christ*. Thus we see how in those early days of the *Greek Church* what excellent persons many of those were, who were zealous professors of *Christianity*; and concerning those of the *Latin Church*, I shall only mention that speech of *St. Austin* who was himself an instance of the same nature and a star of the first magnitude among them. *Nonne aspicimus quanto auro & argento & v. ste suffarcinatus exieris de Aegypto Cyprianus Doctor suavissimus & Martyr beatissimus? quanto Lactantius? quanto Victorinus, Optatus, Hilarius? ut de vivis taceam: quanto innumerabiles Gracii? quod prior ipse fidelissimus Dei servus Moses fecerat, de quo Scriptum est, quod eruditus fueris omni sapientia Aegyptiorum.* To whose catalogue of learned persons, among the *Latin Christians* *Tertullian*, *Arnobius*, and several others may be deservedly added. But as *St. Austin* there well observes, though the *Israelites* went rich out of *Aegypt*, yet it was their eating the *Passover* which saved them from destruction: so though these were accomplished with those perfections and riches of the soul, the ornaments of learning, yet it was their eating the same *Passover* which was *Christ*, by their adhering to his doctrine, was that which would be of more advantage to them, then all their accomplishments would be. Now then since in the first ages of the *Christian Church* we find not only innumerable multitudes of persons of great integrity and sobriety in their lives embracing the doctrine of *Christ*, but so many persons that were curious inquirers after the truth of things, we can certainly have no reason to distrust such a Testimony which was received in so unanimous a manner, by persons as able to judge of the truth of things, and as fearful of being deceived in reference to them as any now in the world can be.

§. 19.

2. As this testimony was received by persons inquisitive after the truth of things, so the doctrine conveyed by it was a matter of the highest moment in the world: and therefore we

cannot

cannot conceive but persons ordinarily inquisitive about other things would be more then ordinarily so about this, because their eternal welfare and happiness did depend upon it. All persons that are truly religious, must at least be allowed to be persons very inquisitive after the state and condition of their souls when they shall be dislodged from their bodies. And if we do but grant this, can we in any reason think that such a multitude of persons in so many ages should continue venturing their souls upon a Testimony which they had no assurance of the truth of? And that none of all these persons enough men otherwise rational and judicious, should be able to discover the falsity of that doctrine they went upon, if at least any upon consideration of it can imagine it to be so? It is not reconcileable with the general presumption of humane nature concerning Divine providence and the care God takes of the welfare of men, to suffer so many persons who sincerely desire to serve God in the way which is most pleasing to him, to go on in such a continual delusion, and never have it at all discovered to them. If all then who have believed the doctrine of Christ to be the only way to salvation have been deceived, either we must deny altogether a Divine Providence, or say the Devil hath more power to deceive men then God to direct them, which is worse then the former, or else asserts that there are no such things at all as either God or Devils, but that all things come to pass by chance and fortune; and if so, it is still more inexplicable why such multitudes of rational and serious men, and the most inquisitive part of the world as to such things should all be so possessed with the truth and certainty of these things; and the more profane, wicked, and ignorant any persons are, the more prone they are to mock and deride them. If such men then see more into truth and reason then the sober and judicious part of mankind, let us bid adieu to humanity and adone the brutes; since we admire their judgement most, who come the nearest to them.

3. The multitude of these persons thus consenting in this Testimony, could have no other engagement to this consent, but only their firm persuasion of the truth of the doctrine conveyed by it; because those who unanimously agree in this thing are such persons whose other designs and interests in this world,

differ as much as any mens do. If it had been only a consent of Jews, there might have been some probable pretence to have suspected a matter of interest in it; but as to this thing, we find the Jews divided among themselves about it; and the first deniers of the truth of it, do yet inviolably preserve those sacred records among them, from which the truth of the doctrine of Christ may be undoubtedly proved. Had the Christian Religion been enforced upon the world by the Roman Emperours at the time of its first promulgation, there would have been some suspicion of particular design in it; but it came with no other strength but the evidence of its own truth; yet it found sudden and strange entertainment among persons of all Nations and degrees of men. In a short time it had eaten into the hearts of the Roman Empire, and made so large a spread therein, that it made Tertullian say, *Hæsterni sumus, & vestra omnia implevimus, urbes, insula, castella, municipia, conciliabula, castra ipsa, tribus, decuriam, palatium, senatum, forum; sola vobis relinquimus Tempia.* We newly appeared, saith he, and yet we have filled all places with our company but only your Temples; and before speaking of the Heathens; *Obsessam vociferantur civitatem, in agris, in castellis, in insulis Christianos, omnem sexum, ætatem, conditionem, etiam dignitatem transgredi ad hoc nomen quasi detrimento cœrent.* All sorts and conditions of men in all places, were suddenly become Christians. What common-tye could there be now to unite all these persons together, if we set aside the undoubted truth and certainty of the doctrine of Christ, which was first preached to them by such who were eye-witnesses of Christs actions, and had left sacred records behind them, containing the substance of the doctrine of Christ and those admirable instructions, which were their only certain guides in the way to heaven?

Apolog.
cap. 36.

Apel. c. 1.

4. Because many persons do joyn in this consent with true Christians, who yet could heartily wish that the doctrine of Christianity were not true. Such are all those persons who are sensual in their lives, and walk not according to the rules of the Gospel, yet dare not question or deny the truth of it. Such, who could heartily wish there were no future state, nor judgement to come, that they might indulge themselves in this

this world without fear of another; yet their consciences are so far convinced of, and awed by the truth of these things, that they raise many perplexities and anxieties in their minds which they would most willingly be rid of; which they can never thoroughly be, till instead of having the name of Christians, they come to live the life of Christians, and become experimentally acquainted with the truth and power of Religion. And withal we find that the more men have been acquainted with the practice of Christianity, the greater evidence they have had of the truth of it, and been more fully and rationally perswaded of it. To such, I grant there are such powerful evidences of the truth of the doctrine of Christ by the effectual workings of the Spirit of God upon their souls, that all other arguments, as to their own satisfaction, may fall short of these. As to which, those verses of the *Poet Dantes*, rendred into *Latine* by *F. S.* are very pertinent and significant; when he had introduced the *Apostle Peter* asking him what it was which his faith was founded on, he answers,

*Deinde exiit ex luce profunda
Qua illic splendebat pretiosa gemma
Super quam omnis virtus fundatur.*

i. e. That God was pleased by immediate revelation of himself, to discover that divine truth to the world whereon our faith doth stand as on its sure foundation; but when the *Apostle* goes on to enquire how he knew this came at first from God, his answer to that is,

*Larga pluvia
Spiritus Sancti, quæ est diffusa
Super veteres & super novas membranas,
Est syllogismus ille qui eam mihi conclusit
Ad id acutè, ut præ illâ demonstratione
Omnis demonstratio alia mihi videatur obtusa.*

i. e. That the Spirit of God doth so fully discover its self, both in the Old and New Testament, that all other arguments are

but dull and heavy if compared with this. It is true they are so to a truly enlightened conscience which discovers so much beauty and glory in the Scriptures, that they ravish the soul, although it be unable to give so full an account of this unto others who want the eyes to see that beauty with, which a heart truly gracious hath. We see ordinarily in the world, that the attraction of beauty is an unaccountable thing; and one may discern that which ravisheth him, which another looks on as mean and ordinary: and why may it not be much more thus in divine objects which want spiritual eyes to discover them? Therefore I grant that good men enjoy that satisfaction to their own Consciences, as to the truth of the Doctrine of Christ, which others cannot attain to; but yet I say, that such do likewise see the most strong, rational, and convincing evidence which doth induce them to believe; which evidence is then most convincing, when it is seconded by the peculiar energy of the Spirit of God upon the souls of true Believers. But yet we see that the power and force of the truth of these things may be so great, even upon such minds which are not yet moulded into the fashion of true goodness, that it may awe with its light and clearness, where it doth not soften and alter by its heat and influence. Now whence can it be that such convictions should stick so fast in the minds of those who would fain pull out those piercing arrows, but that there is a greater power in them than they are masters of, and they cannot stand against the force whereby they come upon them; nor find any salve to cure the wounds which are made within them, but by those weapons which were the causes of them? And therefore, when wicked persons under conflicts of conscience, cannot ease themselves by direct Atheism, or finding reasons to cast off such convictions by discerning any invalidity in the Testimony whereon the truth of these things depends, it is a certain argument that there is abundant truth in that Testimony, when men would fain persuade themselves to believe the contrary, and yet cannot.

5. The truth of this consent appears, from the unanimity of it among those persons who have yet strangely differed from each other in many controversies in Religion. We see thereby this unanimity is no forced or designed thing, because we see the

the persons agreeing in this, do very much disagree from each other in other things. And the same grounds and reasons whereon they disagree as to other things, would have held as to these too, were there not greater evidence of the certainty of these things then of those they fall out about. It hath not yet become a question among those who differ so much about the sense of Scripture, whether the Scripture its self be the word of God, although the very accounts on which we are to believe it to be so, hath been the subject of no mean Controversies. All the divided parts of the Christian world do yet fully agree in the matters of fact, viz. that there was such a person as Jesus Christ, and that he did many great miracles, that he dyed on the Cross at Jerusalem, and rose again from the dead; now these contain the great foundations of Christian faith; and therefore the multitude of other controversies in the world ought to be so far from weakening our faith, as to the truth of the doctrine of Christ (which men of weak judgments and Atheistical spirits pretend) that it ought to be a strong confirmation of it, when we see persons which so previously quarrel with each other about some inferior and less weighty parts of Religion, do yet unanimously consent in the principal foundations of Christian faith, and such whereon the necessity of faith and obedience, as the way to salvation, doth more immediately depend. And this may be one great reason why the infinitely wise God may suffer such lamentable contentions and divisions to be in the Christian world, that thereby inquisitive persons may see that if Religion had been a meer design of some few polittick persons, the quarrelsome world (where it is not held in by force) would never have consented so long in the owning such common principles which all the other controversies are built upon. And although it be continually seen that in divided parties, one is apt to run from any thing which is received by the other, and men generally think they can never run far enough from them whose errors they have discovered, that yet this principle hath not carryed any considerable party of the Christian world (out of their indignation against those great corruption which have crept into the world under a pretence of Religion) to the disowning the foundation of

Christian Faith, must be partly imputed to the signal hand of divine providence, and partly to those strong evidences which there are of the truth of that Testimony which conveys to us the foundations of *Christian Faith*. Thus we see now, how great and uncontroled this consent is, as to the matters of fact delivered down from the eye-witnesses of them, concerning the actions and miracles of our blessed Saviour (which are contained in the Scriptures as authentical records of them) and what a sure foundation there is for a firm assent to the truth of the things from so universal and uninterrupted a tradition.

§. 20. Thus far we have now manifested the necessity of the miracles of Christ, in order to the propagation of Christianity in the world, from the consideration of the persons who were to propagate it in the world; the next thing we are to consider, is, the admirable success which the Gospel met with in the world upon its being preached to it: Of which no rational account can be given, unless the actions and miracles of our Saviour were most undoubtedly true. That the Gospel of Christ had very strange and wonderful success upon its first preaching, hath been partly discovered already, and is withall so plain from the long continuance of it in these European parts, that none any wayes conversant in the history of former ages, can have any ground to question it. But that this strange and admirable success of the doctrine of Christ should be an evidence of the Truth of it, and the miracles wrought in confirmation of it, will appear from these two considerations. 1. That the Doctrine its self was so directly contrary to the general inclinations of the world. 2. That the propagation of it was so much opposed by all worldly power.

1. That the doctrine its self was so opposite to the general inclinations of the world. The doctrine may be considered either as to its credenda, or matters of faith, or as to its agenda, or matters of life and practice; both these were contrary to the inclinations of the world: the former seemed hard and incredible, the latter harsh and impossible.

1. The matters of faith which are to be believed by the world, were not such things which we may imagine the vulgar

vulgar sort of men would be very forward to run after, nor very greedy to imbrace. 1. *Because contrary to the principles of their education, and the Religion they were brought up in; the generality of mankind is very tenacious of those principles and prejudices which are sucked in in the time of Infancy.* There are some Religions one would think it were impossible that any rational men should believe them, but only on this account because they are bred up under them. It is a very great advantage any Religion hath against another, that it comes to speak first, and thereby insinuates such an apprehension of its self to the mind, that it is very hard removing it afterwards. The understanding seems to be of the nature of those things which are *communis juris*, and therefore *primum sunt possidentis*; when an opinion hath once got possession of the mind, it usually keeps out whatever comes to disturb it. Now we cannot otherwise conceive but all those persons who had been bred up under Paganism and the most gross Idolatry, must needs have a very potent prejudice against such a doctrine which was wholly irreconcilable with that Religion which they had been devoted to. Now the stronger the prejudice is which is conveyed into mens minds by the force of education, the greater strength and power must there needs be in the Gospel of Christ, which did so easily demolish these strong holds, and captivate the understandings of men to the obedience of Christ. To which purpose

Arnobius excellently speaks in these words to the Heathens; *Sed non creditis gesta hac. Sed quia conficari sunt fieri & sub oculis suis viderunt agi, testes optimi certissimique auctores, & crediderunt hac ipsi, & credenda posteris nobis haud exilium cum approbationibus tradiderunt. Quinam isti fortasse queritis? gentes, populi, nationes, & incredulum illud genus humanum. Quod nisi aperta res esset, & luce ipsa quemadmodum dicitur clarior, nunquam rebus huiusmodi credulitatis sua commodarent assensum. An nunquid dicemus illius temporis homines usque adeo fuisse vanos, mendaces, stultos, brutos, ut quae nunquam viderant vidisse se fingerent? & quae facta omnino non erant falsis proderent testimoniis aut puerili assertionem firmarent? Cumque possent vobiscum & unanimiter vivere, & inoffensas ducere conjunctiones, gratuita susciperent*

Arnob. c. 1.
gentes. l. 1.

odia

odia & execrabili haberentur in nomine? Quod si falsa sit
 dictis historia illa verum est, unde tam brevi tempore totum
 mundus ista religione completus est? Aut in unam coire qui
 potuerunt mentem gentes regionibus diffusa, ventus cœlique con-
 vexionibus dimota? Affecutionibus illecta sunt nudus; in-
 ducta in spes cessas, & in pericula capitis immittere se sponte
 temeraria desperatione voluerant, cum nihil tale viderent
 quod eas in hos cultus novitatis suae possit excitare miraculo.
 Imo quia hac omnia ab ipso cernebant geri & ab ejus praconi-
 bus qui per orbem totum missi beneficia patris & munera sa-
 nandis animis hominibusque portabant, veritatis ipsius vi victa,
 & dederunt se Dio, nec in magnis posuere dispendiis membra
 vobis projicere, & viscera sua lanianda prabere. The sub-
 stance of whole discourse is, that it is impossible to suppose
 so many persons of so many Nations to be so far besotted and
 infatuated, as not only to believe a Religion to be true which
 was contrary to that they were educated in, but to venture
 their lives as well as estates upon it, had it not been discover-
 ed to them in a most certain and infallible way by such who
 had been eye-witnesses of the actions and miracles of Christ
 and his Apostles. And as he elsewhere speaks, *Vel hac saltem*
fidem vobis faciant argumenta credendi quod jam per omnes
terras in tam brevi tempore & parvo immensi nominis hujus
sacramenta diffusa sunt; quod nulla jam natio est tam barbari
moris & mansuetudinem nesciens, quæ non ejus amore versa
molliverit asperitatem suam, & in placidos sensus assumpta
tranquillitate migraverit; quod tam magnis ingenii pradiis
Oratores, Grammatici, Rhetores, Consulis juris ac Medici,
Philosophia etiam secreta rimantes, magisteria hac expetant,
spretis quibus paulo ante fidebant, &c. Will not this persuade
 the world what firm foundations the faith of Christians stands
 on, when in so short a time it is spread over all parts of the
 world? that by it the most inhumane and barbarous Nations
 are softened into more than civility? That men of the great-
 est wits and parts Orators, Grammarians, Rhetoricians, Law-
 yers, Physicians, Philosophers, who not? have forsaken their
 former sentiments, and adhered to the doctrine of Christ.
 Now, I say, if the power of education be so strong upon the
 minds of men to persuade them of the truth of the Religion
 they

C. gentes
 lib. 2. p. 44.

they are bred up under (which *Atheistically* disposed persons make so much advantage of) this is so far from *weakening* the truth of *Christianity*, that it proves a great confirmation of it, because it obtained so much upon its first *Preaching* in the world, notwithstanding the highest prejudices from education were against it. If then men be so prone to believe that to be most true which they have been educated under, it must argue a more then ordinary evidence and power in that religion which unsettles so much the principles of education, as to make men not only question the truth of them but to renounce them, and embrace a religion contrary to them.

Especially when we withall consider what strong-holds §. 21. these principles of education were backed with among the *Heathens*, when the doctrine of *Christ* was first divulged among them i. e. what plausible pretences they had of continuing in the Religion which they were brought up in, and why they should not exchange it for *Christianity*; and those were.

1. The pretended antiquity of their religion above the *Chri-* Tertul. ad
stian; the main thing pleaded against the *Christians* was Nat. l. 1.
divortium ab institutis majorum, that they thought them- cap. 10.
selves wiser then their fore-fathers; and *Symmachus*, Liba- Symmach.
nius and others plead this most in behalf of *Paganisme*; ser- ep. l. 10.
vanda est tot seculis fides, & sequendi sunt nobis parentes qui Liban. orat.
senti sunt feliciter suos; their religion pleaded prescription de Templis.
against any other, and they were resolved to follow the
steps of their ancestors wherein they thought themselves
happy and secure. *Cacilius* in *Minutius Felix* first argues Minut. Fe-
much against dogmatizing in religion, but withall sayes it lxx. p. 6:
most becomes a lover of truth, majorum excipere disciplinam,
religiones traditas colere, Deos quos a parentibus ante imbutus
et timere; nec de numinibus ferre sententiam sed prioribus
credere. So *Arnobius* tells us the main thing objected against Arnob. c.
the *Christians* was novellam esse religionem nostram, & ante gent. l. 2.
diu natam propemodum paucos, neque vos potuisse antiquam pag. 90.
& patriam relinquere, & in barbaros ritus peregrinosque tra-
duci. And *Cotta* in *Tully* long before, laid this down, as the De nat. De-
main principle of *Pagan religion*, majoribus nostris etiam nulla orum. l. 3.

ratione reddita credere, to believe the tradition of our Fathers although there be no evidence in reason for it: And after he hath discovered the vanity of the Stoical arguments about religion, concludes with this as the only thing he resolved his religion into, mihi unum satis erit, majores nostros ita tradidisse, It is enough for me that it comes by tradition from

Lactant. decur fore-fathers. Lactantius fully sets forth the manner of orig. error. pleading used by the Heathens against the Christians in the l. 2. c. 6. point of antiquity. Ha sunt religiones, quas sibi à majoribus

suis traditas, pertinacissime tueri ac defendere perseverant; nec considerant quales sint, sed ex hoc probatas atque veras esse cõsiliunt, quod eas veteres tradiderunt; tantaque est auctoritas vetustatis, ut inquirere in eam scelus esse dicatur. The Englishs, they accounted tradition infallible, and knew no other way whereby to find the truth of religion but by its conveyance from their fore-fathers. How like herein do they speak to those who contend for the corruptions crept into the Christian Church? who make use of the same pretences for them; viz. that they were delivered down from the Fathers; tantaque est auctoritas vetustatis, ut inquirere in eam scelus esse dicatur; who are we who will see further then Antiquity? But it is no wonder if Antiquity be accompanied with dimness of sight; and so it was un doubtedly as to the Pagan world, and as to the Christian too, when such a mixture of Heathenism came into it. And the very same arguments by which the pleaders for Christianity did justify the truth of their religion, notwithstanding this pretended antiquity, will with equal force hold for a reformation of such inveterate abuses which under a pretence of antiquity

Ambros. ep. have crept into the Christian Church. Nullus pudor est ad c. Symmach. meliora transire, saith Ambrose in his answer to Symmachus,

what shame is it to grow better? Quid facies? saith Lactantius, majores ne potius an rationem sequeris? Si rationem magis, discedere te necesse est ab institutis & auctoritate majorum: quoniam id solum rectum est, quod ratio praescribit. Sin autem peras majores si qui suadet: fateris igitur & statos illos esse qui excogitatis contra rationem religionibus suaverint; & te ineptum qui id colas quod falsum esse convicimus. Where reason and meet authority of fore-fathers stand in

compr

competition, he is more a *child* than a *man* that knows not on which side to give his *suffrage*. But with the greatest strength and clearest reason *Araobius* speaks in this case. *C. gen. l. 2.* *Itaque cum nobis intentis aversionem à religione priorum, causam convenit ut inspiciatis, non factum, nec quid reliquerimus opponere, sed secuti quid simus potissimum contineri.* When you charge us, saith he, that we are revolted from the religion of our fore-fathers, you ought not presently to condemn the fact, but to examine the reasons of it; neither ought you so much to look at what we have left, as what it is we have embraced. Nam si mutare sententiam culpa est nulla vel crimen, & à veteribus institutis in aliis res novas voluntate/que migrare, criminatio ista & vos spectat, qui toties vitam consuetudinemque mutastis; qui in mores alios, atque alios ritus priorum condemnatione transistis. If meer departing from the religion of our ancestors be the great fault, all those who own themselves to be *Christians*, were themselves guilty of it when they revolted from *Heathenism*. If it be here said that the case is different, because there was sufficient reason for it, which there is not as to the corruptions of the *Christian Church*; if so, then all the dispute is taken off from the matter of fact, or the revolt, to the causes inducing to it; and if the *Protestant* be not able as to the causes of our separation from *Rome* to manifest that they were sufficient, let him then be triumphed over by the *Romanist*, and not before. I assert then and that with much assurance of mind, that the principles of the *Reformation* are justifiable upon the same grounds of reason, which the embracing *Christianity* was, when men of *Heathens* became *Christians*, and that the arguments made use of by the *Romanists* against our separation from them, are such as would have justified a *Pagan Philosopher* in not embracing *Christianity*. For if it be unlawful for any party of men to divide from others in a matter of religion which pretends antiquity and universality, it had been unlawful for a *Philosopher* to have deserted *Paganism*, as well as for a *Protestant* to depart from *Rome*. For according to the principles of the *Romanists*, the judgement in the cause of the separation and of the truth of religion lies in that party from which we depart; if we do now but apply this to

the old Roman Senate or Emperors in the case of Christian religion and dividing from Heathen worship, we shall quickly see how easie a matter it will be to make Christianity its self a Schism, and the doctrine of Christ the greatest heresy. But as strong as those pretences were then, or have been since, the power of the doctrine of Christ hath been so great, as to conquer them, and thereby to manifest that it was of God, when such potent prejudices were not able to withstand it. Of which Antiquity is the first.

Maut. in
Octavio.
pag. 6.

2. The large and universal spread of Pagan religion, when Christianity came into the world; there was never so great Catholicism as in Heathen worship, when the Apostles first appeared in the Gentile world. *Inde adeo per universa imperia, provincias, oppida, videmus singulos sacrorum ritus gentiles habere, & Deos colere municipes*, saith Caelius in Minutius Felix. The great charge against the Christians was Novellism, that they brought in a strange and unheard of religion. The common Question was, *Where was your religion before Jesus of Nazareth*, as it hath been since, *Where was your religion before Luther*? and the same answer which served then, will stand unmoveable now, *there where no other religion is, in the Word of God*. For this was the weapon whereby the Primitive Christians defended themselves against the assaults of Paganisme, and the evidences they brought, that the doctrine preached by them and contained in the Scriptures was originally from God, were the only means of overthrowing Paganism, notwithstanding its pretended universality.

Apol. c. 38.

3. Settlement by Laws of Heathen worship. This was so much pretended and pleaded for, that as far as we can find by the history of the Primitive Church, the pretence on which the Christians suffered, was sedition and opposing the established Laws. The Christians were reckoned *inter illicitas factiones*, as appears by Tertullian, among unlawful corporations; the Politicians and Statesmen were all for preserving the Laws; they troubled not themselves much about any religion; but only that which was settled by Law, they sought to uphold, because the acting contrary to it might bring some disturbance to the civil state. There were several Laws which

which the *Christians* were then brought under, and condemned for the breach of. 1. *The Law against heraria, or conventicles* as they were pleased frequently to stile the meeting of *Christians* together: thence the places where the *Christians* assembled for worship, were commonly called *Con-* *Observat.*
venticula; ita appellabant loca, saith *Heraldius*, ubi congre- *ia Arnob.*
gabatur Christiani oraturi, & verbi divini interpretationem *l. 4.*
accepturi, ac sacras Synaxes habituri: but *Elmenhorstius*
more shortly; *Conventicula loca sunt ubi Christiani Con-*
gregati orare consueverunt. The places where the *Christians*
did meet and pray together, were called *Conventicles*: in *Basi-*
lica Sicinnini ubi ritus Christiani est conventiculum, saith *Hist. l. 17.*
Ammianus Marcellinus; cur immaniter, conventicula dirui? *Arnob. l. 4.*
saith *Arnobius*; qui universum populum cum ipso pariter
conventiculo concremavit, as *Lactantius* likewise speaks. Now *Lactant. l.*
the reason of the name was, because the *Heathens* judged *S. C. 11.*
these assemblies of *Christians* to be *Illegal Societies*. For
which we are to understand, that in the time of the *Roman*
Emperors when they grew suspicious of their own safety,
they severely prohibited all those *Sodalities*, or *Societies*
and *Colledges*, which were very much in use in the *Roman-*
Common-wealth, in imitation of the *itæneæ* in the Cities of
Greece. These were such societies of persons, which volun-
tarily confederated together either for some particular design,
or for preserving Love and Friendship among each other, and
thence had their frequent meetings in common together.
Now the more numerous these were, and the more closely
they confederated, the more jealous eye the *Roman Emperors*
had upon them, because of some clandestine designs, which
they suspected might be carried on for disturbance of the
publike peace in such suspicious meetings. Thence came out
many particular edicts of the *Emperours* against all such
kinds of societies.

Now when the *Christians* began to be somewhat nume-
rous, and had according to the principles of their Religion
frequent Assemblies for Divine worship, and did confederate
together by such Symbols, of being washed with water, and
eating and drinking together (which was all the *Heathens*
apprehended by their use of baptism, and the Lords Supper)

L b 10. ep.

97.

the *Proconsuls* and other *Magistrates* in their several *Provinces* bring the *Christians* under these *Edicts*, and so punished them for the breach of the *Laws*. Which as appears by the *wiser Heathens* did proceed against the *Christians*; for we see he troubled not himself much about the truth and evidence of *Christian Religion*, but such persons were brought before him, and after he had interrogated them whether they were *Christians*, or no, several times, if they persisted, he then punished them not so much for their *Religion*, as for their obstinacy and contempt of authority. For so much is implied in those words of his, *Neque enim dubitabam, quaecumque esset quod facerentur, pervicaciam certe, & inflexibilem obstinationem debere puniri: that whatever their Religion was, their obstinacy and disobedience deserved punishment.* That which the *Christians* now pleaded for themselves, why they should not be reckoned among the *factious* of the people, was that which they gave in answer to *Pliny*, that all their fault was, *Quod essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire, carmenque Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem, seque sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent.* That they were wont upon their solemn dayes to meet together for divine worship, and to Covenant with each other only for the practise of those things which were as much for the good of mankind as their own, viz. that they would not wrong and defraud others, as to their bodies or estates. And *Tertullian* approves of the Law against *factious*, as de *providentia & modestia publica*, ne *civitas in partes scinderetur*, as wisely intended to prevent *Seditions*; but withal pleads, that the society of *Christians* could not be reckoned *inter illicitas factiones*; for, saith he, *hac coitio Christianorum merito sane illicita si iis par; merito damnanda si quis de ea queritur eo titulo quo de factionibus querela est.* In *cujus perniciem aliquando convenimus? Hoc sumus congregati quod & dispersi; hoc universi quod & singuli; neminem ledentes, neminem contristantes; quum probi, quum boni coeunt, quum pii quum casti congregantur, non est factio dicenda sed curia.* If, saith he,

Apolog.
cap. 38.

L. 11. cap. 11. *homicida contra pios jura impia considerunt; nam & confitiones Sacrilega, & disputationes Jurisperitorum legantur injusta; and as he tells us, Domitius Ulianus had collected all those Rescripta nefaria together, which concerned the Christians; from hence it was, Christianity by Pliny, is called amentia, by Tacitus exitiabilis superstitio, by Suetonius Superstitio nova & exitiabilis; so much did these three great men agree, in condemning the best Religion in the world for madness, and new, and detestable Superstition; the ground of the great pique was, the enmity declared by Christians against the Idolatrous Temples, and worship of the Heathens.*

4. The Law against Treason; for sometimes they proceeded so high, as to accuse the Christians *laesa Majestati*, and thence they are commonly called *publici hostes*, enemies to all civil Government. Which they inferred from hence:

1. Because they would not sacrifice for the Emperours safety; *Ideo committimus*, saith Tertullian, in *Majestatem Imperatorum, quia illos non subijcimus rebus suis; Quia non ludimus de officio salutis eorum, qui eam non putamus in manibus esse plumbatis*. The accusation for treason lay in their refusing to supplicate the Idols for the Emperours welfare. 2. Because they would not swear by the Emperours Genius. Thence

Saturninus said to the Martyr, *Tantum jura per genium Caesaris nostri*, if he would but swear by the Genius of Caesar, he should be saved. Yet though they refused to swear by the Emperours genius, they did not refuse to testify their

Alligiance, and to swear by the Emperours safety. *Sed & juramus*, saith Tertullian, *Sicut non per genios Caesarum, ita per salutem eorum quae est augustior omnibus genis*. 3. Because they would not worship the Emperours as Gods; which was then grown a common custome. *Non enim Deum Imperatorem dicam, vel quia mentiri nescio, vel quia illum deridere non audeo, vel quia nec ipse se Deum vult dici si homo sit*, as the same Author speaks. Nay the primitive Christians were very scrupulous of calling the Emperours *Dominum*, *hoc enim Dei est cognomen*, because the name Lord was an attribute of Gods, and applied as his name to him in Scripture. The reason of this Scrupulosity was not, from any

question

question they made of the *Sovereignty of Princes*, or their obligation to obedience to them (which they are very free in the acknowledgement of) but from a *jealousie* and just suspicion that something of *Divine honour* might be implied in it, when the adoration of *Princes* was grown a custom. Therefore *Tertullian* to prevent misunderstandings, saith, *Cap. 34. Dicam plane Imperatorem Dominum, sed more Communi, sed quando non cogor ut Dominum Dei vice dicam.* They refused not the name in a common sense, but as it implied *Divine honour*.

4. Because they would not observe the publick festivals of the *Emperors* in the way that others did, which it seems were observed with abundance of looseness and debauchery by all sorts of persons; and as *Tertullian* smartly says, *malorum Cap. 35. morum licentia pietas erit; & occasio luxuria religio deputabitur? Debauchery is accounted a piece of loyalty, and intemperance a part of religion.* Which made the *Christians* rather hazard the reputation of their loyalty, then bear a part in so much rudeness as was then used, and thence they abhorred all the solemn spectacles of the *Romans*; *nihil est nobis*, saith the same author, *dictum, visum, auditum, cum insania Cap. 38. Circi, cum impudicitia Theatri, cum atrocitate arena, cum Xysti vanitate.* They had nothing to do either with the madness of the *Cirque*, or the immodesty of the *Theatre*, or the cruelty of the *Amphitheatre*, or the vanity of the publick wrestlings. We see then what a hard Province the *Christians* had, when so many *Laws* were laid as birdlime in their way to catch them, that it was impossible for them to profess themselves *Christians* and not run into a *Præmunire* by their *Laws*. And therefore it cannot be conceived that many out of affectation of novelty should then declare themselves *Christians*, when so great hazards were run upon the professing of it. Few soft-spirited men, and lovers of their own ease, but would have found some fine distinctions and nice evasions to have reconciled themselves to the publick *Laws* by such things which the *Primitive Christians* so unanimously refused, when tending to prophaness or Idolatry. And from this discourse we cannot but conclude with the *Apostle Paul*, that the weapons whereby the *Apostles* and

1 Cor. 10. Primitive Christians encountered the Heathen world, *mere*
 4. 5. *fleshly or weak*, but exceeding strong and powerful, in that they obtained so great a conquest over the imaginations and carnal reasonings of men (which were their strong holds they secured themselves in) as to make them readily to forsake their Heathen worship, and become chearful servants to Christ. Thus we see the power of the doctrine of Christ which prevailed over the principles of education, though backed with pretended antiquity, universality, and establishment by civil Laws.

§. 22. But this will further appear if we consider that not only the matters of faith were contrary to the principles of education, but because many of them seemed incredible to mens natural reason; that we cannot think persons would be over forward to believe such things. Every one being so ready to take any advantage against a religion which did so little flatter corrupt nature either as to its power or capacity, in so much that those who preached this doctrine, declared openly to the world, that such persons who would judge of the Christian doctrine, by such principles which meer natural reason did proceed upon (such one I suppose it is whom the Apostle calls *ῥογινὸς ἀνθρώπου*, one that owned nothing but natural reason whereby to judge of Divine truths) could not entertain matters of faith or of Divine revelation, because such things would seem but folly to him that owned no higher principle then Philosophy, or that did not believe any Divine inspiration; neither can such a one know them, because a Divine revelation is the only way to come to a thorough understanding of them: and a person who doth not believe such a Divine revelation, it is impossible he should be a competent judge of the truth of the doctrine of Christ. So that the only ground of receiving the doctrine of the Gospel is upon a Divine revelation, that God himself by his Son and his Apostles hath revealed these deep mysteries to the world, on which account it is we are bound to receive them, although they go beyond our reach and comprehension. But we see generally in the Heathen world how few of those did believe the doctrine of Christ in comparison, who were the great admirers of the Philosophy and way of learning which

was then cryed up: the reason was, because Christianity not only contained far deeper mysteries than any they were acquainted with, but delivered them in such a way of authority, commanding them to believe the doctrine they preached on the account of the Divine authority of the revealers of it. Such a way of proposal of Doctrines to the world the Philosophy of the Greeks was unacquainted with, which on that account they derided as not being suited to the exact method which their sciences proceeded in. No doubt had the Apostles come among the Greeks *ἡτοιμασμέναις* with a great deal of pomp and ostentation, and had sed mens curiosities with vain and unnecessary speculations, they might have had as many followers among the Greeks for their sakes, as Christ had among the Jews for the sake of the loaves. But the matters of the Gospel being more of inward worth and moment, than of outward pomp and show, the vain and empty Greeks presently find a quarrel with the manner of proposing them; that they came not in a way of clear demonstration, but stood so much upon faith as soon as it were delivered. Thence Celsus and Galen think they have reason enough to reject the Laws of Moses and Christ, because Celsus calls them *ῥῆμα ἀνομοδίκλον*, Galen Christianity *ἡτοιμασμένον*, that they were such doctrines which require faith and obedience without giving mens reason an account of the things commanded. As though the authority of a Legislator sufficiently manifested, were not enough to enforce a Law, unless a sufficient account were given of the thing required to the purblind reason of every individual person acted by passions and private interests, as to the justice and equity of it. And so the primary obligation on mans part to faith and obedience, must arise not from the evidence of Divine authority, but of the thing it self which is revealed, to the most partial judgement of every one to whom it is proposed. Which those who know how short the stock of reason is at the best in men, and how easily that which is, is fashioned and moulded according to prejudices and interests already entertained, will look upon only as a design to comply with the carnal desires of men, in that thereby none shall be bound to go any further, than this blind and corrupted guide shall lead them. Now these

Orig. l. 1. c. 2
Cels. Gal de
differ. p. 15.
lib. 2. c. 4.

being the terms on which the Gospel of Christ must have expected entertainment in the Gentile world, how impossible had it been ever to have found any success among men, had there not been sufficient evidence given by a power of miracles, that however strange and incredible the doctrine might seem, yet it was to be believed because there was sufficient means to convince men that it was of Divine revelation.

§. 23.

Neither were the matters of faith only contrary to the inclinations of the world, but so were the precepts of life or those things in Christianity which concerned practice. There are two things which are the main scope and design of Christianity in reference to mens lives, to take them off from their sins, and from the world, and of all things these are they which mens hearts are so bewitched with. Now the

- precepts of the Gospel are such which require the greatest
 Mat 5. 8. purity of heart and life, which call upon men to deny them-
 16. 24 selves, and all ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world; that, all
 Tit 2. 12. that name the name of Christ must depart from iniquity; that,
 2 Tim 2. 19. all true Christians must be cleansed from all filthiness of flesh
 2 Cor. 7. 1. and spirit, and must perfect holiness in the fear of God. And the Gospel enforceth these precepts of holiness with the most terrible denunciations of the wrath of God on those who
 2 Thess 1. 7, 8. disobey them; that, the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who
 1 Cor. 6. 9, hold the truth in unrighteousness. That, no persons who
 104 live in the habitual practice of any known sin, shall inherit the
 Gal. 4. 20. Kingdom of God. That, no man should deceive them with
 Eph. 5. 5, 6. vain words, for because of these things comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience; that men do but vainly flatter themselves when they seek to reconcile unholy lives with the hopes of future happiness; for without holiness, no
 Heb. 12. man shall see the Lord. And then in reference to the things
 14. of this present life which men busie themselves so much about, the Gospel declares that, they who love this world, the love of
 1 Joh. 2. 14. the Father is not in them; that, the friendship of this world

is enemy with God; and *whoever will be a friend of the* James 4. 4.
world, is an enemy to God, That Christians must not set their Col. 3. 1. 2.
afflictions on earth, but on things in heaven; That, the conver- Phil. 3. 20.
sation of true Christians is in heaven. That, we ought not to Mat. 6. 20.
lay up our treasure on earth, but in heaven; That, we must not 2 Cor. 4. 18.
look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not
seen; for the things which are seen are temporal but the things
which are not seen are eternal. Now the whole design of the
doctrine of Christ being to persuade men to lead a holy and
heavenly life while they are in this world, and thereby to be
made meet to partakers of the inheritance with the Saints in Col. 1. 12.
light, can we think so many men whose hearts were wedded
to sin, and the world, could so suddenly be brought off from
both without a divine power accompanying that doctrine
which was preached to them? And therefore the Apostle
saith, ἡ ἐμνηστευμένη ἐστὶν τῷ Χριστῷ, I am not ashamed Rom. 1. 16.
of the Gospel of Christ; i. e. though the Gospel of Christ be
the only true mystery, yet I do not by it as the Heathens are
wont to do with their famous Eleusinian mysteries which
were kept so secret by all the mystæ and ἱερεῖς; but, saith
he, I know no reason I have to be ashamed of any thing in the
Gospel, that I should labour its concealment to advance its ve-
neration; but the more publick the Gospel is, the more it
manifests its power; for through it God is pleased mightily
to work, in order to the salvation both of Jew and Gentile.
And of all the success of the Gospel, that upon the hearts
and lives of men deserves the greatest consideration.

The great efficacy and power of the Gospel was abundantly
 seen in that great alteration which it wrought in all those
 who were the hearty embracers of it. The Philosophers did
 very frequently and deservedly complain of the great ineffi-
 cacy of all their moral precepts upon the minds of men, and
 that by all their Instructions, *politiora non meliora, ingenia*
fiunt, men, improved more in knowledge than goodness; but
 now Christianity not only enforced duties on men with great-
 er power and authority; For the Scriptures do, as Saint
 Austin speaks, *Non tanquam ex Philosophorum concertationi-* Aug. de
bus strepere, sed tanquam ex oraculis & Dei nubibus intonare, Civis Dei Civit. Dei
not make some obstreperous clameurs, like those tinkling l. 2. c. 19.

Cymbals the Philosophers, but awe the souls of men with the majesty of that God from whom they came. Neither was it only a great and empty sound which was heard in the preaching of the Gospel, but when God thundred therein, he broke down the stately Cedars, and shook the Wilderness, and made

Psalm 29. the Hinds to Calve, (as it is said of Thunder, called the voice
55, 8, 9. of the Lord in Scripture) be humbled the pride of men,
unsettled the Gentile world from its former foundations, and wrought great alterations on all those who hearkened to it.

The whole design of the Gospel is couched in those words which Saint Paul tells us were spoken to him by Christ him-
self, when he appointed him to be an Apostle, to open mens
Act. 26. 18. eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which were sanctified by faith in Christ. And the efficacy of this doctrine in order to these great ends, was abundantly seen in the preaching of that Apostle, who was so instrumental in converting the world to piety and sobriety, as well as to the doctrine of Christ. What strange persons were the Corinthians before they became Christians ! for when the Apostle had enumerated many of the vilest persons of the world, he presently adds, And such
1 Cor. 6. 10, 11. were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. The more dangerous the distemper is, the more malignant its nature, the more inveterate its continuance, the greater the efficacy of the remedy which works a cure of it. The power of grace is the more seen in conversion, the greater the sins have been before it. It is an easie matter in comparison, to remove a disease at its first onset, of what it is to cure it when it becomes Chronical. The power of the Gospel wrought upon all sorts and kinds of persons, to manifest to the world there was no distemper of mens souls so great, but there was a possibility of a remedy for it; and not only so, but pregnant and visible instances were given of the power and efficacy of it. For they themselves shew of us, saith the
1 Thes. 1. 9, 10. Apostle, What manner of entering in we had among you, and how ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his son from heaven, whom he raised
from

from the dead, even *Jesus*, which delivered us from the wrath to come. Now that which manifests the exceeding great power and excellency of the Gospel, was, that it not only turned men from one way of worship to another, which is a matter of no great difficulty, but that it turned men together with *that*, from their lusts and sensuality, to a holy and unblameable life. For being more in love with their sins, then with their opinions, it must needs be a greater power which draws men from the practice of habitual sins, then that which only makes them change their opinions, or alter the way of worship they were brought up in. This is that which *Origen* throughout his books against *Celsus* triumphs in as the most signal evidence of a divine power in the doctrine of *Christ*, that it wrought so great an alteration on all that truly embraced it, that of vicious, debauched, and dissolute, it made them temperate, sober and religious. *ἐν τοσούτοις ἀνθρώποις ἐμπεσόντων C. Celsus*
ἀπὸ τῶν χυδαίων καὶ ἡδονῶν, ἐπὶ τὴν κατὰ φύσιν κατὰ σωφροσύνην ἔλ. 2. γ. 78.
καὶ λογίων ἀειτῶν βίον. The doctrine of Christ did convert the 85. lib. 1.
most wicked persons who embraced it, from all their debaucheries, to a life most suitable to nature and reason, and to the practice of all virtues. Therefore certainly the Gospel could not want that commendation among all ingenious Moralists, that it was the most excellent instrument in the world to reform the lives of men, and to promote real goodness in it. When they could not but take notice of so many persons continually so brought off from their follies and vain conversations, to a life, serious, sober, and unblameable; nay and some of the Christians were of so much integrity and goodness, that their greatest enemies were forced to say that their only fault was that they were Christians. Bonus vir Cajus Sejus, tantum quod Christianus. A very good man, only a Christian. But one would think this should have made them have a higher opinion of Christianity, when it did so suddenly make so many good men in the world. Especially when this power was so manifest on such persons who were supposed incapable of being reformed by Philosophy, young, illiterate, and mean-spirited persons; therefore it may be justly supposed that it was not by the strength of their own reason that this alteration was wrought within them, but by that Divine power which

Orig. c.
Cels. l. 3.
p. 128.

which was able to tame the most unruly, to instruct the most ignorant, to raise up the most sordid persons to such a generous temper as to slight the good things of this life, in comparison with those to come. And so remarkable was the difference of life then between those who were Christians, and those who were not, (as there is still between true Christians and meer pretenders) that Origen dares Celsus to compare them in point of morality with any other Societies in the world, αὶ γὰρ οὐδὲν Χριστοῦ μαθητὰς δεικνύουσιν ἐκκλησίαις, οὐδεὶς ἐκζητῶν τῆς αὐτῆς παροικίας δόξαν ἐκκλησίας, ὡς ποιεῖσιν ἐν κίσματι τίς γὰρ ἢ αὐτῶν δημοληγόντων καὶ τοῦ χρίστου οὐδὲν ἐκκλησίας, καὶ Συγχρίστου βαπτιστῶν ἐκκλησίας, πολλῶν κρήνης πυγχαίνων οὐδὲν ἐν τῇς δόξαις ἐκκλησιῶν; For the Churches of God, which are disciples to Christ, being compared with other Societies, shine among them like lights in the world. For who can but confess, that even the worser part of the Christian Churches exceeds the best of the popular Assemblies? For, as he goes on, the Church of God which is at Athens, that is περὶ τὴν πρὸς τὴν εὐσταθίαν, very quiet and peaceable, because it seeks to approve its self to God, but the popular Assembly at Athens that is τῆς ἀνιστασίας, seditious and quarrelsome, and in nothing comparable to the Church of God there. So it is, if we compare the Churches of Corinth and Alexandria with the Assemblies of the people there. So that any candid enquirer after truth will exceedingly wonder (how such fair Islands should appear nantes in gurgite vasto, in the midst of such a Sea of wickedness as was in those Cities) how these Churches of God should be planted in such rude and prophane places. So the same Author goes on, to compare the Churches Senate with that of the Cities, the Churches Officers with theirs, and appeals to themselves, that even those among them who were most lukewarm in their office, did yet far exceed all the City Magistrates in all manner of virtues. From whence he rationally concludes, εἰ γὰρ τὰυτὸ εὐσεβὲς ἔχει, πῶς ἢ εὐλογεῖται μὴ μολύσκειν αὐτοὶ τὸ ἱερὸν ποταμὸν ἑωσίου ἀδυναμία, ὅτι καὶ ἡ πύξις δεικνύει τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ; If these things be so, how can it but be most rational to adore the Divinity of Jesus, who was able to accomplish such great things. And that not upon one or two, but upon such great multitudes as were then converted to the Christian

Christian faith. We read of one Phædon, and one Polemon brought from their debaucheries by Socrates and Xenocrates; but what are these compared with those who were turned from their sins to God by the Gospel of Christ! ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν πρὸς τὰς Ἑλλήνας, εἰς τοὺς παῖδας καὶ ἐκ δαδᾶς αἱ διδάσκαλοι, καὶ εἰς Περὶ Orig. l. 1. 1. αἵματα, καταβαλόντες ἀπὸ αἰσώτης καὶ μοχθηροτάτου βίου, ἐπισκοποῦσαν p. 90. ὅτι οὗτοι τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἔμενοι τίτε οἱ δάσκαλοι, ἀλλ' αὐτοὶ καὶ πολλαπλασίονες, &c. The twelve Apostles were but the first fruits of that plentiful harvest of converts which followed afterwards. And although Celsus (like an Epicurean) seems to deny the possibility of any such thing as conversion, because customary sins become a second nature, that no punishments can reform them; Ταῦτα, saith Origen, herein he not only contradicts us Christians, but all such as were Ἀγλαῖος φιλοσόφουσαντες, who owned any generous principles of Philosophy, and did not despair of recovering virtue, as a thing feasible by humane nature; and gives instances ad hominem, to prove the possibility of the thing from the ancient Heroës, Hercules and Ulysses, from the two Philosophers, Socrates and Menonius, and the two famous converts to Philosophy, Phædon and Polemon. But yet, saith he, these are not so much to be wondered at, that the eloquence, and reason of the Philosophers should prevail on some very few persons, but that the mean and contemptible language of the Apostles, should convert such multitudes from intemperance to sobriety from injustice to fair dealing, from cowardise to the highest constancy, yea so great as to lay down their lives for the sake of virtue; how can we but admire so divine a power as was seen in it? And therefore, saith he, we conclude, ἐν τοῖς θεοῖς λόγῳ ἀμείλιαι γενναίαν φυσικότητα εἶχεν ὁ μόνον ἢ ἐξιδύναται, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ παντὶ χαλεπότερον That it is so far from being impossible, that it is not at all difficult for corrupt nature to be changed by the Word of God. Lactantius excellently manifests Lactant. de that Philosophy could never do so much good in the world as false sup. Christianity did, because that was not suited at all to common capacities, and did require so much skill in the Arts to prepare men for it, which it is impossible all should be well skilled in, which yet are as capable or being happy, as any others are. And how inefficacious the precepts of Philosophy were, appears by the Philosophers themselves, who were far from

Cap. 16.

having command by them over their masterless passions, and were fain sometimes to confess that nature was too headstrong to be kept in by such weak reins as the precepts of Philosophy were : But, saith he, what great command divine precepts have upon the souls of men, daily experience sheweth. *Da mihi virum qui sit iracundus, maledicus, effrenatus, paucissimis Dei verbis, tam placidum quam ovem reddam. Da cupidum, avarum, tenacem; jam tibi eum liberalem dabo, & pecuniam suam plenis manibus largientem. Da timidum doloris ac mortis; jam cruces, & ignes, tantum contemnet. Da libidinosum, adulterum, ganeonem; jam sobrium castum, continentem videbis. Da crudelem, & sanguinis appetentem, jam in veram clementiam furor ille mutabitur. Da injustum, insipientem, peccatorem, continuo & aquus & prudens, & innocens erit.* In which words that elegant writer doth by a Rhetorical Scheme set out the remarkable alteration which was in any who became true Christians, that although they were passionate, covetous, fearful, lustful, cruel, unjust, vicious, yet upon their being Christians, they became mild, liberal, courageous, temperate, merciful, just and unblamable; which never any were brought to by meer Philosophy, which rather teacheth the art of concealing vices, then of healing them. But now when Christianity was so effectual in the cure of those distempers which Philosophy gave over as beyond its skill and power, when cured them with so great success, and that not in a Paracelsian way, for them to relapse afterwards with greater violence, but it did so strongly unsettle the fomes morbi, that it should never gather to so great a head again; doth not this argue a power more then Philosophical, and that could be no less then divine power which tended so much to reform the world, and to promote true goodness in it?

§. 24.

Thus we have considered the contrariety of the doctrine of Christ to mens natural inclinations, and yet the strange success it had in the world, which in the last place will appear yet more strange, when we add the almost continual opposition it met with from worldly power and policy. Had it been possible for a cunningly devised fable, or any meer contrivance of impostors to have prevailed in the world, when the most

poor and subtle persons bent their whole wits and designs for suppressing it? Whatever it were in others, we are sure of some of the Roman Emperours, as Julian and Dioclesian, that it was their master-design to root out and abolish Christianity; and was it only the subtilty of the Christians which made these persons give over their work in despair of accomplishing it? If the Christians were such subtle men, whence came all their enemies to agree in one common calumny, that they were a company of poor, weak, ignorant, inconsiderable men! and if they were so, how came it to pass, that by all their power and wisdom they could never exterminate these persons, but as they cut them down, they grew up the faster, and multiplied by their subtraction of them! There was something then certainly peculiar in Christianity, from all other doctrines, that it not only was not advanced by any civil power, but it got ground by the opposition it met with in the world. And therefore it is an observable circumstance, that the first Christian Emperor (who acted as Emperor for Christianity) viz. Constantine (for otherwise I know what may be said for Philippus) did not appear in the world till Christianity had spread its self over most parts of the habitable world. God thereby letting us see, that though the civil power, when become Christian, might be very useful for protecting Christianity, yet that he stood in no need at all of it as to the propagation of it abroad in the world. But we see it was quite otherwise in that Religion which had Mars its ascendant, viz. Mahometism; For like Paracelsus his Demon, it alwayes sat upon the pummel of the sword, and made its way in the world meerly by force and violence; and as its first constitution had much of blood in it, so by it hath it been fed and nourished ever since. But it was quite otherwise with the Christian Religion, it never thrived better then in the most barren places, nor triumphed more, then when it suffered most; nor spread its self further then when it encountered the greatest opposition. Because therein was seen the great force and efficacy of the doctrine of Christ, that it bore up mens spirits under the greatest miseries of life, and made them with cheerfulness to undergo the most exquisite torments which the cruelty of Tyrants could invent. The

Stoicks and Epicureans boasts that their wise man would be happy in the Bull of Phalaris, were but empty and Thesonical words which none would venture the truth of by an experiment upon themselves. It was the Christian alone, and not the Epicurean, that could truly say in the midst of torments, Suave est & nihil curo, and might justly alter a little of that common saying of the Christians, and say, Non magna loquimur, sed patimur, as well as vivimus; the Christians did not speak great things, but do and suffer them. And this gained not only great reputation of integrity to themselves, but much advanced the honour of their Religion in the world, when it was so apparently seen that no force or power was able to withstand it. Will not this at least per-

Arnob. l. 2. c. gentes.

swade you that our Religion is true, and from God, saith Arnobius? Quodcum genera pœnarum tanta sint à vobis proposita Religionis hujus sequentibus leges, angeatur res magis, & contra omnes minas, atque interdita formidinum animis populus obnitatur, & ad credendi studium prohibitionum ipsius stimulis excitetur? — Itane istud non divinum & sacrum est, aut sine Deo, eorum tantas animorum fieri conversiones ut cum carnifices unci, alique innumeri cruciatus, quemadmodum diximus, impendeant crediturum, veluti quadam dulcedine; atque omnium virtutum amore correpti, cognitae accipiant rationes, atque mundi omnium rebus proponant amicitiam Christi? That no fears, penalties, or torments, were able to make a Christian alter his profession, but he would rather bid adieu to his life than to his Saviour.

Lib. 1. c. Celsus p. 21. V. etiam l. 2. p. 110.

This Origen likewise frequently takes notice of, when Celsus had objected the novelty of Christianity; the more wonderful it is (saith Origen) that in so short a time it should so largely spread its self in the world; for if the cure of mens bodies be no wrought without Divine Providence, how much less the cure of so many thousands of souls which have bin converted at once to humanity and Christianity, especially when all the powers of the world were from the first engaged to hinder the progress of this doctrine, and yet notwithstanding all this opposition, εὐαγγελίου, καὶ τοιοῦτοῦ ἀποστόλου οὐκ ἔστιν ὅτι οὐδὲν ἔστιν ἀνταγωνιστὴν ἰσχυρότερον, πῶς οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ὃ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἡγεμόνων, καὶ μαγιστὸς μυστῶν οὐκ ἔστιν

ἡ δὲ ἐν τῷ αἰὲν διδομένη: The Word of God prevailed, as not being able to be stoppt by men, and became master over all its enemies, and not only spread its self quire through Greece, but through a great part of the world besides, and converted an innumerable company of souls to the true worship and service of God. Thus we have now manifested from all the circumstances of the propagation of the doctrine of Christ, what evidence there was of a divine power accompanying of it; and how useful the first miracles were in order to it.

CHAP. X.

The difference of true miracles from false.

The unreasonableness of rejecting the evidence from miracles, because of impostures. That there are certain rules of distinguishing true miracles from false, and Divine from diabolical, proved from Gods intention in giving a power of miracles, and the providence of God in the world. The inconvenience of taking away the rational grounds of faith and placing it on self-evidence. Of the self-evidence of the Scriptures, and the insufficiency of that for resolving the question about the authority of the Scriptures. Of the pretended miracles of Impostors and false Christs, as Barchochelas David el-David and others. The rules whereby to judge true miracles from false. 1. True Divine miracles are wrought to confirm a Divine testimony. No miracles necessary for the certain conveyance of a Divine testimony: proved from the evidences that the Scriptures could not be corrupted. 2. No miracles Divine which contradict Divine revelation. Of Popish miracles. 3. Divine miracles leave Divine effects on those who believe them. Of the miracles of Simon Magus. 4. Divine miracles tend to the overthrow of the Devils power in the world: the antipathy of the doctrine of Christ to the Devils designs in the world. 5. The distinction of true miracles from others, from the circumstances and manner of their operation. The miracles of Christ compared with those of the Heathen Gods. 6. God makes it evident to all impartial judgements that Divine miracles exceed created power. This manifested from the unparalled miracles of Moses and our Saviour. From all which the rational evidence of Divine revelation is manifested, as to the persons whom God employes to teach the world.

§. I. **H**AVING thus far stated the cases wherein miracles may justly be expected as a rational evidence of Divine authority in the persons whom God employes by way of peculiar message

message to the world, and in the prosecution of this discourse manifested the evidences of Divine authority in Moses and the Prophets, and in our Saviour and his Apostles; the only remaining question concerning this subject is, how we may certainly distinguish true and real miracles from such as are only pretended and counterfeited. For it being as evident that there have been impostures and delusions in the world as real miracles, the minds of men will be wholly to seek when to rely upon the evidence of miracles as an argument of Divine authority in those persons who do them, unless a way be found out to distinguish them from each other. But if we can make it appear, that, unless men through weakness of judgement or incogitancy deceive themselves, they may have certain evidence of the truth of miracles, then there can be nothing wanting as to the establishment of their minds in the truth of that doctrine which is confirmed by them. There hath been nothing which hath made men of better affections than understandings, so ready to suspect the strength of the evidence from miracles concerning Divine testimony, as the multitude of impostures in the world under the name of miracles, and that the Scripture its self tells us we must not hearken to such as come with lying wonders. But may we not therefore safely relye on such miracles which we have certain evidence could not be wrought but by Divine power, because forsooth the Devil may sometimes abuse the ignorance and credulity of unwary men? or is it because the Scripture forbids us to believe such as should come with a pretence of miracles, therefore we cannot rely on the miracles of Christ himself? which is as much as to say, because the Scripture tells us that we must not believe every spirit, therefore we must believe none at all; or because we must not entertain any other doctrine besides the Gospel, therefore we have no reason to believe that. For the ground whereby we are assured by the Scriptures that the testimony of Christ was Divine, and therefore his doctrine true, is, because it was confirmed by such miracles as he did; now if that argument were insufficient which the Scriptures tell us was the great evidence of Christs being sent from God, we cannot give our selves a sufficient account in point of evidence on which we believe the doctrine of

of the Gospel to be true and Divine. But the only rational pretence of any scruple in this case must be a supposed uncertainty in our rules of judging concerning the nature of miracles; for if there be no certain *criteria* or notes of difference, whereby to know Divine miracles from delusions of sense and the impostures of the Devil, I must confess that there is an apparent insufficiency in the evidence from miracles; but if there be any certain rules of proceeding in this case, we are to blame nothing but our incredulity if we be not satisfied by them. For the full clearing of this, I shall first make it appear that there may be certain evidence found out, whereby we may know true miracles from false, and Divine from diabolical. And, Secondly, Enquire into those things which are the main notes of difference between them. First, That there may be certain evidence whereby to know the truth of miracles. I speak not of the difference *ex parte rei* between miracles and those called wonders, as that the one exceed the power of created agents, and the other doth not; for this leaves the enquirer as far to seek for satisfaction as ever; for granting that a Divine power is seen in one and not in the other, he must needs be still dissatisfied, unless it can be made evident to him that such things are from Divine power, and others cannot be. Now the main distinction being placed here in the natures of the things abstractly considered, and not as they bear any evidence to our understandings; in stead of resolving doubts it increaseth more; for, as for instance, in the case of the Magicians rods turning into serpents, as well as Moses his; what satisfaction could this yield to any spectator to tell him, that in the one there was a Divine power and not in the other, unless it were made appear by some evidence from the thing, that the one was a meer imposture, and the other a real alteration in the thing it self? I take it then for granted, that no general discourses concerning the formal difference of miracles and wonders considered in themselves can afford any rational satisfaction to any inquisitive mind; that which alone is able to give it, must be something which may be discerned by any judicious and considerate person. And that God never gives to any a power of miracles, but he gives some such ground of satisfaction concerning

cerning them, will appear upon these two considerations.

1. *From Gods intention in giving to any this power of doing miracles.* We have largely made it manifest that the end of true miracles is to be a confirmation to the world of the Divine commission of the persons who have it, and that the testimony is Divine which is confirmed by it. Now if there be no way to know when miracles are true or false, this power is to no purpose at all: for men are as much to seek for satisfaction, as if there had been no such things at all. Therefore if men are bound to believe a Divine testimony, and to rely on the miracles wrought by the persons bringing it, as an evidence of it, they must have some assurance that these miracles could not come from any but a Divine power.

2. *From the providence of God in the world;* which if we own, we cannot imagine that God should permit the Devil whose only design is to ruine mankind, to abuse the credulity of the world so far, as to have his lying wonders pass uncontroul'd, which they must do, if nothing can be found out as a certain difference between such things as are only of Diabolical, and such as are of Divine power. If then it may be discovered that there is a malignant spirit which acts in the world, and doth produce strange things, either we must impute all strange things to him, which must be to attribute to him an infinite power, or else that there is a being infinitely perfect which crosseth this malignant spirit in his designs: and if so, we cannot imagine he should suffer him to usurp so much tyranny over the minds of men, as to make those things pass in the more sober and inquisitive part of the world for Divine miracles which were only counterfeits and impostures. If then the providence of God be so deeply engaged in the discovering the designs of Satan, there must be some means of this discovery, and that means can be supposed to be no other in this case, but some rational and satisfactory evidence, whereby we may know when strange and miraculous things are done by Satan to deceive men, and when by a Divine power to confirm a Divine testimony.

But how is it possible, say some, that miracles should be

§. 2.

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any ground on which to believe a testimony Divine, when
 Matth. 24. Christ himself hath told us, that there shall arise false Christs,
 24. and false Prophets and shall shew great signs and wonders, in
 so much that if it were possible they should deceive the very elect.
 2Thes. 2.9. and the Apostle tells us, that the coming of Antichrist will
 be with all power and signs and lying wonders. How then can
 we fix on miracles as an evidence of Divine testimony when
 we see they are common to good and bad men, and may seal
 indifferently either truth or falsehood? To this I reply:

I. Men are guilty of doing no small disservice to the doctrine of Christ, when upon such weak and frivolous pretences they give so great an advantage to infidelity, as to call in question the validity of that which yielded so ample a testimony to the truth of Christian religion. For if once the rational grounds on which we believe the doctrine of Christ to be true and Divine, be taken away, and the whole evidence of the truth of it belaid on things not only denied by men of Atheistical spirits, but in themselves such as cannot be discerned or judged of by any but themselves, upon what grounds can we proceed to convince an unbeliever that the doctrine which we believe is true! If they tell him, that a light and fire manifest themselves, so doth the doctrine of the Scripture to those who believe it: It will be soon replied, that self-evidence in a matter of faith can imply nothing, but either a firm persuasion of the mind concerning the thing propounded: or else that there are such clear evidences in the thing it self, that none who freely use their reason can deny it: the first can be no argument to any other person any further then the authority of the person who declares it to have such self evidence to him, doth extend its self over the mind of the other: and to ones self it seems a strange way of arguing, I believe the Scriptures because they are true, and they are true because I believe them; for self-evidence implies so much, if by it be meant the persuasion of the mind that the thing is true: but if by self-evidence be further meant such clear evidence in the matter propounded that all who do consider it, must believe it: I then further enquire whether this evidence doth lie in the naked proposal of the things to the understanding: and if so, then every one who assents to this

proposition that the whole is greater than the part, must likewise assent to this, that the Scripture is the Word of God; or whether doth the evidence lie, not in the naked proposal, but in the efficacy of the Spirit of God on the minds of those to whom it is propounded. Then, 1. The self-evidence is taken off from the written Word which was the object, and removed to a quite different thing which is the efficient cause.

2. Whether then any persons who want this efficacious operation of the Spirit of God, are or can be bound to believe the Scripture to be Gods Word? If they are bound, the duty must be propounded in such a way as may be sufficient to convince them that it is their duty; but if all the evidence of the truth of the Scripture lie on this testimony of the Spirit, then such as want this, can have none at all. But if lastly, by this self evidence be meant such an impress of Gods authority on the Scriptures that any who consider them as they ought, cannot but discern, I still further enquire, whether this impress lies in the positive assertions in Scripture that they are from God, and that cannot be unless it be made appear to be impossible that any writing should pretend to be from God when it is not; or else in the written books of Scripture, and then let it be made appear that any one merely by the evidence of the writings themselves without any further arguments can pronounce the Proverbs to be the Word of God, and not the book of Wisdom; and Ecclesiastes to be Divinely inspired and not Ecclesiastical; or else the self evidence must be in the excellency of the matters which are revealed in Scripture; but this still falls very short of resolving wholly the question whether the Scripture be the Word of God; for the utmost that this can reach to is, that the things contained in Scripture are of so high and excellent a nature, that we cannot conceive that any other should be the author of them, but God himself; all which being granted, I am as far to seek as ever what grounds I have to believe that those particular writings which we call the Scripture are the Word of God, or that God did immediately employ such and such persons to write such and such books; for I may believe the substance of the doctrine to be of God, and yet not believe the books wherein it is contained, to be a Divine and infallible testimony; as

is evident in the many excellent *devotional books* which are in the world.

But yet further, if the only ground on which we are to believe a doctrine Divine, be the self-evidencing light and power of it, then I suppose there was the same ground of believing a Divine testimony when the doctrine was declared without writing by the first Preachers of it. So that by this method of proceeding, the ground of believing Christ to be sent as the *Messias* sent from God, must be wholly and solely resolved into this, that there was so much self-evidence in this proposition uttered by Christ, *I am the light of the world*, that all the Jews had been bound to have believed him sent from God (for light manifests its self) al though our Saviour had never done any one miracle to make it appear that he came from God. And we cannot but charge our Saviour on this account with being at a very unnecessary expence upon the world in doing so many miracles, when the bare naked affirmation that he was the *Messias*, had been sufficient to have convinced the whole world. But is it conceivable then upon what account our Saviour should lay so much force on the miracles done by himself in order to the proving his testimony to be Divine; that he saith himself, *that he had a greater witness than that of John* (who yet doubtless had self-evidencing light going along with his doctrine too) *for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me.* Can any thing be more plain, or have greater self-evidence in it, then that our Saviour in these words doth lay the evidence of his Divine testimony upon the miracles which he wrought, which on that account he so often appeals to, on this very reason, *because they bear witness of him; and if they would not believe him on his own testimony, yet they ought to believe him for his works sake.* Doth all this now amount only to a removing of prejudices from the person of Christ? which yet according to the reason of the objection we are considering of, it is impossible the power of miracles should do, if these miracles may be so far done or counterfeited by false Christs, that we can have no certain evidence to distinguish the one from the other.

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Which the objection pretends; and was the great thing wherein Celsus the Epicurean triumphed so much, that Christ should foretell that others should come and do miracles which they must not hearken to, and thence would infer as from Christ's own confession that miracles have in them nothing divine, but what may be done by wicked men: *παρ' ὧν ἡ γέννησις ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἔργον ἔστι καὶ ἀπὸ θεοῦ, καὶ ὁ γέννηται ἡ γέννηται*, Is it not a wretched thing, saith he, that from the same works one should be accounted a God, and others deceivers? Whereby those who would invalidate the argument from miracles, may take notice how finely they fall in with one of the most bitter enemies of Christian religion, and make use of the same arguments which he did; and therefore Origen's reply to him, will reach them too. For, saith he, our Saviour in those words of his doth not bid man beware in general of such as did miracles, *οὐκ ἀπὸ τοῦ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἔργου ἐκείνου ἐστὶν ὅτι καὶ οὐκ ἐκείνου ἐστὶν, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἔργου ἐκείνου ἐστὶν ὅτι καὶ οὐκ ἐκείνου ἐστὶν*; but bids them beware of that when men gave themselves out to be the true Christ the Son of God, and endeavour to draw Christ's Disciples from him, by some meer appearances in stead of miracles. Therefore Christ being evidently made appear to be the Son of God, by the powerful and uncontrouled miracles which he wrought, what pretence of reason could there be to hearken to any who gave themselves out to be Christs, meerly from some strange wonders which they wrought? And from hence, as he further observes, may be justly inferd contrary to what Celsus imagined, that there was certainly an evidence of Divine power in miracles, when these false Christs gave themselves out to be Christs, meerly from the supposal that they had this power of doing miracles. And so it is evident in all the false Christs which have appeared, they have made this their great pretence that they did many signs and wonders; which God might justly permit them to do, to punish the great infidelity of the Jews who would not believe in Christ notwithstanding those frequent and apparent miracles which he did, which did infinitely transcend those of any such pretenders. Such among the Jews were Jonathas, who after the destruction of Jerusalem,

§. 3.

Orig. lib. 2.
c. Cels.

as Josephus tells us, drew many of the people into the Wilderness of Cyrene, *ἐρημία & ὁρίματα ἀνθρώπων ἐμοχθηδόνος*, promising to shew them many 'prodigies and strange appearances. Not long after in the times of Adrian appeared that famous blazing star Barchochebas, who not only portended but brought to much mischief upon the Jews; his pretence was that he vomited flames, and so he did, such as consumed himself and his followers; after him many other Impostors arose in Egypt, Cyprus and Crete, who all went upon the same pretence of doing Miracles. In latter times the famous impostor was David el David, whose story is thus briefly reported by David Ganz. David el-David pretended to be the true Messias, and rebelled against the King of Persia, and did many signs and prodigies before the Jews and the King of Persia: at last his head was cut off, and the Jews fined an hundred talents of Gold; in the Epistle of Rambam or R. Moses Maimon. It is said, that the King of Persia desired of him a sign, and he told him, that he should cut off his head and he would rise again; (which he cunningly desired to avoid, being tormented) which the King was resolved to try, and accordingly executed him; but I suppose his resurrection and Mahomet's will be both in a day, although Maimonides tells us, some of the Jews are yet such fools as expect his resurrection. Several other Impostors Maimonides mentions in his Epistle de Australi regione. One who pretended to be the Messias because he cured himself of the leprosie in a night: several others he mentions in Spain, France, and other parts, and the issue of them all was only a further aggravation of the miseries and captivities of the poor Jews, who were so credulous in following Impostors, and yet such strange Infidels where there were plain and undoubted miracles to persuade them to believe in our blessed Saviour as the true Messias. We freely grant them that many pretended miracles may be done in the world to deceive men with: but doth it hence follow that either there are no true miracles done in the world, or that there are no certain rules to distinguish the one from the other? But as Origen yet further replies to Celsus, as a Wolf doth very much resemble a dog, yet they are not of the same kind; nor

Tzmach
David
n. 895.

v. sp. Maimonides
mon. in not.
Vorlii ad
Tzem. Dav.

a turtle Dove and a Pigeon; so that which is produced by a divine power, is not of the same nature with that which is produced by Magick: but as he argues, Is it possible that there should be only deceits in the world, and magical operations; and can there be no true miracles at all wrought? Is humane nature only capable of Impostures, or can none work miracles but Devils? Where there is a worse, there may be a better; and so from the impostures and counterfeits, we may infer that there are true miracles, wrought by a divine power; otherwise it were all one as to say, there are counterfeits, but no Jewels; or there are Sophisms and Paralogisms, but no legitimate demonstrations; if then there be such deceits, there are true miracles too; all the business is to examine the pretenders to do them; and that from the life and manners of those that do them, and from the effects and consequents of them, whether they do good or hurt in the world, whether they correct mens manners, or bring men to goodness, holiness and truth; and on this account we are neither to reject all miracles, nor embrace all pretences, but carefully and prudently examine the rational evidences whereby those which are true and divine, may be known from such which are counterfeit and Diabolical.

And this now leads us to the main subject of this Chapter, viz. What rules we have to proceed by, in judging miracles to be true or false; which may be these following.

§. 4.

True Divine miracles are wrought in confirmation of some Divine Testimony. Because we have manifested by all the precedent discourse, that the intention of miracles is to seal some divine revelation. Therefore if God should work miracles when no divine Testimony is to be confirmed, God would set the broad Seal of heaven to a blank. If it be said no, because it will witness to us now the truth of that Testimony which was delivered so many ages since. I answer, 1. The truth of that Testimony was sufficiently sealed at the time of the delivery of it, and is conveyed down in a certain way to us. Is it not sufficient that the Charter of a Corporation had the Princes broad Seal in the time of the giving of it, but that every succession of men in that Corporation must have a new broad Seal, or else they ought to question their Patent?

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What ground can there be for *that*, when the *original Seal* and *Patent* is preserved, and is certainly conveyed down from age to age? So I say it is as to us, *Gods Grand Charter of Grace and Mercy* to the world through *Jesus Christ*, was sealed by *divine miracles* at the delivery of it to the world; the *Original Patent*, viz. the *Scriptures*, wherein this *Charter* is contained, is conveyed in a most certain manner to us; to this *Patent* the *Seal* is annexed, and in it are contained those undoubted *miracles* which were wrought in confirmation of it, so that a new sealing of this *Patent* is wholly needless, unless we had some cause of suspicion that the *original Patent* it self were lost, or the first sealing was not true. If the latter, then *Christian Religion* is not true, if the *miracles* wrought for confirmation of it were false, because the truth of it depends so much on the *verity* and *Divinity* of the *miracles* which were then wrought. If the first be suspected, viz. the certain conveyance of the *Patent*, viz. the *Scriptures*, some certain grounds of such a suspicion must be discovered in a matter of so great moment, especially when the great and many *Societies* of the *Christian world* do all consent unanimously in the contrary. Nay it is impossible that any rational man can conceive that the *Patent* which we now rely upon, is *suppositions* or *corrupted* in any of those things which are of concernment to the *Christian world*: and that on these accounts.

I. From the *Watchfulness* of *Divine providence* for the good of *mankind*. Can we conceive that there is a *God* who rules and takes care of the world, and who to manifest his signal *Love* to *mankind*, should not only grant a *Patent* of *Mercy* to the world by his son *Christ*, and then sealed it by *divine miracles*, and in order to the certain conveyance of it to the world, caused it by persons imployed by himself to be recorded in a language fittest for its dispersing up and down the world (all which I here suppose) Can we I say conceive that this *God* should so far have cast off his care of the world and the good of *mankind*, which was the original ground of the *Grant* it self, as to suffer any *wicked men*, or *malignant spirits* to corrupt or alter any of those *Terms* in it, on which mens *eternal salvation* depends: much less wholly to suppress
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and destroy it, and to send forth one that is counterfeit and suppositions instead of it, and which should not be discovered by the Christians of that age wherein that corrupt Copy was set forth, nor by any of the most learned and inquisitive Christians ever since. They who can give any the least entertainment to so wild, absurd, and irrational an imagination, are so far from reason, that they are in good disposition to Atheism; and next to the suspecting the Scriptures to be corrupted, they may rationally suspect there is no such thing as a God and providence in the world; or that the world is governed by a spirit most malignant and envious of the good of mankind. Which is a suspicion only becoming those Heathens (among whom it was very frequent) who worshipped the devils instead of Gods.

2. Because of the general dispersion of Copies in the world upon the first publishing of them. We cannot otherwise conceive, but that records containing so weighty and important things, would be transcribed by all those Churches which believed the truth of the things contained in them. We see how far curiosity will carry men as to the care of transcribing ancient MSS. of old Authors, which contain only some history of things past that are of no great concernment to us: Can we then imagine those who ventured estates and lives upon the truth of the things revealed in Scripture, would not be very careful to preserve the authentick instrument whereby they are revealed in a certain way to the whole world? And besides this, for a long time the originals themselves of the Apostolical writings were preserved in the Church, which makes Tertullian in his time appeal to them. *Age jam qui vales curiositatem melius exercere in negotio salutis tue, percurram Ecclesiam Apostolicam, apud quas ipse adhuc cathedra Apostolorum suis locis presidentur, apud quas ipsa authentica eorum litera recitantur, sonantes vocem, & representantes faciem uniuscujusque.* Now how was it possible that in that time the Scriptures could be corrupted, when in some of the Churches the original writings of the Apostles were preserved in a continual succession of persons from the Apostles themselves; and from these originals so many Copies were transcribed, as were conveyed almost all the world over,

through the large *spread* of the *Christian Churches* at that time? and therefore it is impossible to conceive that a *Copy* should be corrupted in one *Church*, when it would fit speedily be discovered by another: especially considering these three circumstances. 1. The innumerable *multitude* of *Copies* which would speedily be taken, both considering the *moment* of the thing, and the *easiness* of doing it: God, probably for that very end, not loading the world with *Pandects* and *Codes* of his *Laws*, but contriving the whole instrument of man's salvation in to narrow a compass, that it might be easily preserved and transcribed by such who were passionate admirers of the *Scriptures*. 2. The great number of learned and inquisitive men who soon sprung up in the *Christian Church*: whose great care was to explain and vindicate the sacred *Scriptures*: can we then think that all these *Watch-men* should be asleep together when the *evil one* came to sow his *Tares*, which it is most unreasonable to imagine, when in the writings of all these learned men, which were very many and voluminous, so much of the *Scripture* was inserted, that had there been corruption in the *Copies* themselves, yet comparing them with those writings, the corruptions would be soon discovered? 3. The great veneration which all *Christians* had of the *Scripture*: that they placed the hopes of their eternal happiness, upon the truth of the things contained in the *Scriptures*: Can we then think these would suffer any material alteration to creep into these records without their observing and discovering it? Can we now think when all persons are so exceeding careful of their *Deeds*, and the *Records* whereon their *estates* depend, that the *Christians* who valued not this world in comparison of that to come, should suffer the *Magna Charta* of that to be lost, corrupted, or imbrazzelled away? Especially considering what care and industry was used by many primitive *Christians* to compare *Copies* together, as is evident in *Pantanus*, who brought the *Hebrew Copy* of *Matthew* out of the *Indies* to *Alexandria*, as *Eusebius* tells us in *Pamphilus*, and the *Library* he erected at *Cæsarea*, but especially in *Origens* admirable *Hexapla*, which were mainly intended for this end.

3. It is impossible to conceive a *corruption* of the *copy* of the *Scriptures*; because of the *great differences* which were all along the *several ages* of the *Church*, between those who acknowledged the *Scriptures* to be *Divine*. So that if one party of them had *foisted in* or *taken out* any thing, and her party was ready to take notice of it, and would be sure to tell the world of it. And this might be one great reason, why God in his wise providence might permit such an increase of *heresies* in the *Infancy* of the *Church*, viz. that thereby *Christians* might be forced to stand upon the guard, and to have a special eye to the *Scriptures*, which were always the great eye-sores of *hereticks*. And from this great variety of the *Church* it was that some of the *Epistles* were long abroad before they found general entertainment in all the *Churches* of *Christ*, because in those *Epistles* which were doubted for some time, there were some passages which seemed to favour some of the *heresies* then abroad: but when upon severe enquiry they were found to be what they pretended, they were received in all the *Christian Churches*.

4. Because of the agreement between the *Old Testament* and the *New*: the *Prophecies* of the *Old Testament* appear with their full accomplishment in the *New* which we have; so that it is impossible to think the *New* should be corrupted unless the *old* were too, which is most unreasonable to imagine, when the *Jews* who have been the great conservators of the *Old Testament*, have been all along the most inveterate enemies of the *Christians*: So that we cannot at all conceive it possible that any material corruptions or alterations should creep into the *Scriptures*, much less that the true copy should be lost, and a new one forged.

Supposing then that we have the same authentic records preserved and handed down to us by the care of all *Christian Churches*, which were written in the first ages of the *Church* of *Christ*; what necessity can we imagine that God should work new miracles to confirm that doctrine which is conveyed down in a certain uninterrupted way to us, as being sealed by miracles undoubtedly *Divine* in the first promulgation and penning of it? And this is the first reason, why the truth of the *Scriptures* need not now be sealed by new

§. 5.

miracles. 2. Another, may be because God in the *Scripture* hath appointed other things to continue in his Church to be as seals to his people of the truth of the things contained in *Scriptures*. Such are outwardly, the *Sacraments* of the Gospel, baptism and the Lords Supper, which are set apart to be as seals to confirm the truth of the Covenant on Gods part towards us in reference to the great promises contained in it, in reference to pardon of sin, and the ground of our acceptance with God by Jesus Christ: and inwardly God hath promised his Spirit to be as a witness within them, that by his working and strengthening grace in the hearts of believers, it may confirm to them the truth of the records of *Scripture*, when they find the counter-part of them written in their hearts by the finger of the Spirit of God. It cannot then be with any reason at all supposed, that when a Divine testimony is already confirmed by miracles undoubtedly Divine, that new miracles should be wrought in the Church to assure us of the truth of it. So Chrysostome fully expresseth himself con-

Chrysost. in
1 Cor. 2.
hom. 6.
p. 276. To.
3. ed. Elton.

cerning miracles, speaking of the first ages of the Christian Church: *ἡ δὲ τῶν χριστιανῶν ἐκκλησία, ἡ τῶν χριστιανῶν ἐκκλησία, αὐτὴ τῶν θεῶν γενομένη καὶ τῶν οὐρανῶν τῶν πνεύματι ἀποκαλύπτειται.* Miracles were very useful then, and not all useful now; for now we manifest the truth of what we speak from the Sacred *Scriptures*, and the miracles wrought in confirmation of them. Which that excellent author there fully manifests in a discourse on this subject, why miracles were necessary in the beginning of the Christian Church, and are not now. To the same purpose St. Austin speaks where he discourseth of the truth of religion; *Accepimus majores nostros visibilia miracula secutos esse; per quos id actum est ut necessaria non essent posteris; because the world believed by the miracles which were wrought at the first preaching of the Gospel, therefore miracles are no longer necessary.* For we cannot conceive how the world should be at first induced to believe without manifest and uncontrouled miracles. For as Chrysostome speaks, *ἡ οὐρανῶν καὶ τῶν οὐρανῶν, καὶ τῶν οὐρανῶν τῶν πνεύματι.* It was the greatest miracle of all, if the world should believe without miracles. Which the Poet Dantes hath well expressed in the twenty fourth Canto of *Paradise*. For when

De ver. Reli-
g. cap. 25.

the *Apostle* is there brought in, asking the *Poet* upon what account he took the *Scriptures* of the *Old and New Testament* to be the Word of God; his answer is,

*Probatio qua verum hoc mihi recludit,
Sunt opera, quæ secuta sunt, ad qua Natura
Non candescit ferrum unquam aut percussit incensum.*

i. e. the evidence of that is the Divine power of miracles which was in those who delivered these things to the world. And when the *Apostle* catechiseth him further, how he knew those miracles were such as they pretend to be, viz. that they were true and Divine, his answer is,

*Si orbis terra sese convertit ad Christianismum,
Inquirebam ego, sine miraculis: hoc unum
Est tale, ut reliqua non sint ejus centesima pars.*

i. e. If the world should be converted to the Christian faith without miracles, this would be so great a miracle, that others were not to be compared with it. I conclude this then, with that known saying of *S. Austin*; *Quisquis adhuc prodigia, non credit, inquit, magnum est ipse prodigium qui mundo credente non credit.* He that seeks for miracles still to induce him to faith, when the world is converted to the Christian faith, he needs not seek for prodigies abroad; he wants only a looking glass to discover one. For as he goes on, unde temporibus cruditis & omne quod fieri non potest respemibus, sine ullis miraculis nimium mirabiliter incredibiliter credidit mundus? Whence came it to pass that in so learyed and wary an age as that was which the *Apostles* preached in, the world without miracles should be brought to believe things so strangely incredible as those were which *Christ* and his *Apostles* preached? So that by this it appears that the intention of miracles was to confirm a Divine testimony to the world, and to make that appear credible which otherwise would have seemed incredible; but to what end now, when this Divine testimony is believed in the world, should miracles be continued among those who believe the doctrine to be Divine, the miracles

*De Civit:
Dei l. 22.
cap. 8.*

2 Thes 2
9, 10.

wrought for the confirmation of it to have been true, and the Scriptures which contain both, to be the undoubted Word of God? To what purpose then the huge outcry of miracles in the Roman Church is, is hard to conceive, unless it be to make it appear how ambitious that Church is of being called by the name of him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. For had they received the Love of the Truth of the Gospel, they would have believed it on the account of those miracles and signs and wonders which were wrought for the confirmation of it, by Christ and his Apostles; and not have gone about by their jugglings and impostures instead of bringing men to believe the Gospel, to make them question the truth of the first miracles, when they see so many counterfeits; had we not great assurance the Apostles were men of other designs and interests than Popish Priests are, and that there is not now any such necessity of miracles, as there was then when a Divine testimony revealing the truth of Christian religion was confirmed by them?

§. 6.
2.

Those miracles cannot be Divine, which are done now for the confirmation of any thing contrary to that Divine testimony, which is confirmed by uncontrouled Divine miracles. The case is not the same now which was before the coming of Christ; for then though the Law of Moses was confirmed by miracles; yet though the doctrine of Christ did null the obligation of that Law, the miracles of Christ were to be looked on as Divine, because God did not intend the Ceremonial Law to be perpetual; and there were many Prophecies which could not have their accomplishment but under a new state. But now under the Gospel, God hath declared this to be the last revelation of his mind and will to the world by his Son; that now the Prophecies of the old Testament are all fulfilled, and the Prophecies of the New respect only the various conditions of the Christian Church, without any the least intimation of any further revelation of Gods mind and will to the world: So that now the Scriptures are our adequate rule of faith, and that according to which we are to judge all

pretenders to inspiration or miracles. And according to this rule we are to proceed in any thing which is propounded to us to believe by any persons, upon a y pretences whatsoever. Under the Law after the establishment of the Law its self by the miracles of Moses the rule of judging all pretenders to miracles was by the worship of the true God. If there arise Deut. 13. among you a Prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign, or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, wherof he spake to thee, saying. Let us go after other Gods (which thou hast not known) and let us serve them: thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that Prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul. Whereby it is plain that after the true doctrine is confirmed by Divine miracles, God may give the Devil or false Prophets power to work if not real miracles, yet such as men cannot judge by the things themselves whether they be real or no; and this God may do for the tryal of mens faith, whether they will forsake the true doctrine confirmed by greater miracles, for the sake of such doctrines which are contrary thereto, and are confirmed by false Prophets by signs and wonders. Now in this case our rule of tryal must not be so much the wonders considered in themselves, whether real or no, as the comparing them with the miracles which were wrought in confirmation of that doctrine, which is contrary to that which these wonders tend to the proving of. Therefore Gods people under the Law were to examine the scope and drift of the miracles; if they were intended to bring them to Idolatry, whatever they were, they were not to hearken to those who did them. So now under the Gospel, as the worship of the true God was then the standard whereby to judge of miracles by the Law of Moses; so the worship of the true God through Jesus Christ, and by the doctrine revealed by him, is the standard whereby we ought to judge of all pretenders to work miracles. So that let the miracles be what they will, if they contradict that doctrine which Christ revealed to the world, we are to look upon them as only tryals of our faith in Christ, to see whether we Love him with all our whole hearts or no. And therefore I think it needless to examine all the parti-

particulars of *Lipſius* his relations of miracles wrought by his *Diva Virgo Hallenſis* and *Aſprecollis*; for if I ſee, that their intention and ſcope is to ſet up the worſhip of *Damons*, or a middle ſort of *Deities* between God and us, which the Scripture is ignorant of, on that very account I am bound to reject them all. Although I think it very poſſible to find out the difference between true miracles and them in the manner and circumſtances of their operation; but this, as it is of more curioſity, ſo of leſs neceſſity; for if the doctrine of the Scriptures was confirmed by miracles infinitely above theſe, I am bound to adhere to that, and not to believe any other doctrine though an Angel from heaven ſhould preach it, much leſs, although ſome Popiſh Priests may boaſt much of miracles to confirm a doctrine oppoſite to the Goſpel: which I know not how far God may in judgement give thoſe images power to work, or others ſaiſt to believe, becauſe they would not receive the truth in the love of it: and theſe are now thoſe ~~right~~ *Jews*, lying wonders which the Scripture forewarns us that we ſhould not believe, viz. ſuch as lead men to the belief of lyes, or of doctrines contrary to that of the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.

2 Theſ. 2. 9.

§. 7.

3.

Where miracles are true and Divine, there the effects which follow them upon the minds of thoſe who believe them, are true and Divine, i. e. the effect of believing of them is, the drawing of men from ſin unto God. This the Primitive Chriſtians inſiſted much upon, as an undoubted evidence that the miracles of Chriſt were wrought by a Divine power, becauſe the effect which followed them, was the work of converſion of ſouls from ſin and Idols to God and Chriſt, and all true piety and virtue. As the effect of the miracles of Moſes was the drawing a people off from Superſtition and Idolatry to the worſhip of the true God; ſo the effect which followed the belief of the miracles of Chriſt in the world was the purging mens ſouls from all ſin and wickedneſs to make them new creatures, and to live in all exactneſs and holineſs of converſation. And thereby *Origen* diſcovers the great difference between the miracles of Chriſt and Antichriſt, that the intent of all Antichriſts wonders was to bring men into error & aſtutus to the deceitfulneſs of unrighteouſneſs whereby to deſtroy them; but

Lib. 2. c.
Celf.

the

the intent of the miracles of Christ was *ὅτι αὐτὸν ἀλλὰ οὐκ ἐπὶ τῇ ψυχῇ* not he deceiving, but the saving of the souls. *τὸ δὲ τὸν ἀποίτημα εἶναι ἐξ ἐνδύλλοις τὰ τῆς κακίας ὑποκαταστῆναι* ἐκ τῆς ἀλαστίας, ἐκ τῆς κακίας ἐκ τῆς ἀλαστίας; who can with any probability say that reformation of life and daily progress from evil to good should be the effect of meer deceit? And therefore he saith, Christ told his Disciples that they should do greater Works then he had done; because by their Preaching and miracles, the eyes of blind souls are opened, and the ears of such as we were deaf to all goodness are opened so far as to hearken to the Precepts and Promises of the Gospel: and the feet of those who were lame in their inward man, are so healed as to delight to run in the way of Gods Commandments. Now is it possible that these should be the effects of any evil Spirit? But on the contrary we see the effects of all impostures and pretended miracles wrought by Diabolical power was to bring men off from God to sin, and to dissolve that strict obligation to duty which was laid upon men by the Gospel of Christ. Thus it was in that early Age of the Apostles, Simon Magus, who far out-went Apollonius Tyaneus or any other Heathen in his pretended miracles, according to the report which is given of him by the Primitive *ἡ ἑκκλησία* Christians, but we see the intent of his miracles was to raise *2 Thes. 2. 9.* an admiration of himself, and to bring men off from all holiness of conversation, by asserting among other damnable heresies, that God did not all regard what men did, but only what they believed: wherein the Gnosticks were his followers. Now when miracles are wrought to be Patrons of sin, we may easily know from whom they come.

Those miracles are wrought by a Divine power which tend *Self. 8.* to the overthrow of the Kingdom of Satan in the world. This *4.* is evident from hence, because all such things as are out of mans power to effect, must either be done by a power Divine, or Diabolical: For as our Saviour argues, Every Kingdom *Match 12.* divided against its self is brought to desolation, and every City *25. 26.* or house divided against its self cannot stand; and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself: how shall then his Kingdom stand? Now Christ by his miracles did not only dispossess Satan out of mens bodies, but out of his Temples too, as hath been shewn already. And besides the doctrine

of *Christ* which was confirmed by those *miracles*, was in every thing directly contrary to the *Devils* design in the world. For, 1. The *Devils* design was to conceal himself among those who worshipped him: the design of the *Gospel* was to discover him whom the *Gentiles* worshipped, to be an evil and malignant spirit, that designed nothing but their ruins. Now it appears in the whole history of *Gentilism*, the grand mystery of State, which the *Devil* used among the *Heathens*, was to make himself to be taken and worshipped for God, and to make them believe that their *Demons* were very good and benign spirits; which made the *Platonists* and other *Philosophers* so much incensed against the *Primitive Christians*, when they declared their *Demons* to be nothing else but infernal and wicked spirits which sought the destruction of souls.

2. The *Devils* great design was to draw men to the practice of the greatest wickedness under a pretence of religion; as is very observable in all the *Heathen* mysteries, which the more recondite and hidden they were, the greater wickedness lay at the bottom of them, and so were to purpose mysteries of iniquity; but now the design of the *Gospel* was to promote the greatest purity both of heart and life: There being in no other religion in the world, either such incomparable Precepts of holiness, or such encouraging Promises to the practice of it (from eternal life hereafter as the reward, and the assistance of Gods spirit to help men here) or such prevailing motives to persuade men to it, from the love of God in *Christ* to the world, the undertakings of *Christ* for us in his death and sufferings, the excellent pattern we have to follow in our Saviours own example; now these things make it plain that the design of *Christ* and the *Devil* are diametrically opposite to each other. 3. The design of the *Devil* is to set God and mankind at the greatest distance from each other; the design of *Christ* in the *Gospel* is to bring them nearer together. The *Devil* first tempts to sin, and then for sin; he makes men presume to sin, and to despair because they have sinned. *Christ* first keeps men from sin by his Precepts and threatenings, and then supposing sin encourageth them to repent with hopes of pardon procured by himself for all truly penitent and living

living sinners. Thus in every thing the design of Christ and the Devil are contrary, which makes it evident that the miracles wrought in confirmation of the doctrine of Christ could be from no evil spirit, and therefore must be from a truly Divine power.

True and Divine miracles may be known and distinguished from false and diabolical, from the circumstances, or the manner of their operation. There were some peculiar signatures on the miracles of Christ which are not to be found in any wrought by a power less than Divine. Which Arnobius well expresseth in these words to the Heathens; *Potestis aliquem nobis designare, monstrare ex omnibus illis Magis qui nunquam fuisse per secula, consimile aliquid Christo millesimo ex parte qui fecerit? qui sine ulla vi carminum, sine herbarum aut graminum succis, sine ulla aliqua observatione sollicita factorum, libaminum, temporum? — Atqui constitit Christum sine ulla adminicula rerum, sine ullius ritus observatione, vel lege, omnia ille qua feci, nominis sui possibilitate fecisse, & quod proprium, consentaneum, Deo dignum fuerat vero, nihil nocens aut noxium, sed opiferum, sed salutare, sed auxiliariis plenum bonis potestatis munifica liberalitate donasse?* He challengeth the Heathens to produce any one of all their Magicians who did the thousand part of what our Saviour did: who made use of none of their Magical rites and observations in what ever he did; and what ever he did was merely by his own power, and was withal most becoming God, and most beneficial to the world. And thence he proceeds to answer the Heathens about the miracles wrought by their Gods, which fell short of those of Christ in three main particulars, the manner of their working, and the number of them, and the quality of the things done.

1. The manner of their working; what they did was with a great deal of pomp and ceremony: what Christ did, was with a word speaking, and sometimes without it by the touch of his garment; *non inquiri, non exigo*, saith he, *quis Deus, aut quo tempore, cui fuerit auxiliatus, aut quem fractum restituerit sanitati; illud solum audire desidero, an sine ullius adjunctione materiae, i. e. medicaminis alicujus, ad sanandum morbos jasserit ab hominibus evolare, imperaverit, fecerit, &*

§. 9.

5.

Arnob. c.
genes. l. 1.
pag. 351. 26.
&c.

emori valetudinum causam & debiliu corpora ad suas remanere naturas. Omitting all other circumstances, name me, saith he, but which of your Gods ever cured a disease without any adjoynd matter, some prescriptions or other; or which of them ever commanded diseases out of bodies by their meer touch, and quite removed the cause of the distempers. *Aesculapius*, he says, cured diseases, but in the way that ordinary Physicians do by prescribing something, or other to be done by the patients. *Nulla autem virtus est medicaminibus amovere quae noceant; beneficia ista rerum, non sunt curantium potestates.* To cure diseases by prescriptions argues no power at all in the prescriber, but virtue in the Medicine.

2. In the number of the persons cured: they were very few which were cured in the Heathen Temples; Christ cured whole multitudes, and that not in the revestries of the Temples where fraud and imposture might be easily suspected, but in the presence of the people who brought to him all manner of persons sick of all sorts of diseases which were cured by him: and these so numerous, that the Evangelist who records many of Christs miracles which had been omitted by the others, yet tells us at last, the miracles of Christ *Joh. 11. 25.* were so many that the whole world would not contain them. But now *Arnobius* tells the Heathens, *Quid prodest ostendere unum aut alterum fortasse curatos, cum tot millibus subvenerit nemo, & plena sint omnia miserorum infeliciumque delubra?* what matter is it to shew one or two cured, when thousands lie continually in the Temples perishing for want of cure? yea, such as did *Aesculapium* ipsum precibus fatigare, & invitare miserrimis votis, that could not beg a cure of *Aesculapius* with all their earnestness and importunity.

3. In the quality of the diseases cured; the cures among the Heathens were some slight things in comparison of those performed by Christ: the most acute, the most Chronical, the most malignant of diseases cured by a touch, a word, a thought. A learned Physician hath undertaken to make it evident from the circumstances of the story, and from the received principles among the most authentick Physicians, that the diseases cured by our Saviour were all incurable by the rules of Physick: if so, the greater the power of our Saviour, who

Gnt. Adver
de morbis
Evangel.

who cured them with so much facility as he did. And he not only cured all diseases himself, but gave a power to others, who were not at all versed in matters of art and subtilty, that they should do miracles likewise, sine facis & adminiculis, without any fraud or assistance: quid dicitis o mentes incredulae, difficiles, dura! alicuius mortalium Iupiter ille Capitolinus huiusmodi potestatem dedit? when did ever the great Iupiter Capitolinus ever give a power of working miracles to any? I do not say, saith he, of raising the dead, or curing the blind, or healing the lame, sed ut pustulam, reduriam, papulam, aut vocis imperio aut manus contractione comprimeres: but to cure a wart, a pimple, any the most trivial thing, with a word speaking or the touch of the hand. Upon this Arnobius challengeth the most famous of all the Heathen Magicians, Zoroastres, Armenius, Pamphilus, Apollonius, Damigero, Dardanus, Velus, Julianus and Babulus, or any other renowned Magician to give power to any one to make the dumb to speak, the deaf to hear, the blind to see, or bring life into a dead body. Or if this be too hard, with all their Magical rites and incantations but to do that, quod a rusticis Christianis iussionibus facilitatum est nudis, which ordinary Christians do by their meer words; So great a difference was there between the highest that could be done by Magick, and the least that was done by the Name and Power of Christ!

Where miracles are truly Divine, God makes it evident to all impartial judgements that the things do exceed all created power. For which purpose we are to observe, that though impostures and delusions may go far, the power of Magicians further when God permits them; yet when God works miracles to confirm a Divine Testimony, he makes it evident that his power doth infinitely exceed them all. This is most conspicuous in the case of Moses and our blessed Saviour. First Moses, he began to do some miracles in the presence of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, turning his rod into a Serpent; but we do not finde Pharaoh at all amazed at it, but sends presently for the Magicians to do the same, who did it (whether really or only in appearance, is not material to our purpose) but Aarons rod swallowed up theirs. The next time

§. 10.
6.

Exod. 8.
10, 12.

the

- 8 19, 22. the waters are turned into blood by Moses, the Magicians they do so too. After this Moses brings up Frogs upon the Land, so do the Magicians. So that here now is a plain and open contest in the presence of Pharaoh and his people, between Moses and the Magicians, and they try for victory over each other; so that if Moses do no more than they, they would look upon him but as a Magician; but if Moses do that which by the acknowledgment of these Magicians themselves could be only by Divine Power, then it is demonstrably evident that his power was as far above the power of Magick as God is above the Devil. Accordingly we find it in the very next miracle in turning the dust into Ciniches, (which we render) lice, the Magicians are non-plust, and give out saying in plain terms, *This is the finger of God.* And what greater acknowledgment can there be of Divine Power then the confession of those who seemed to contest with it, and to imitate it as much as possible? After this we finde not the Magicians offering to contest with Moses, and in the plague of boyles we particularly read that they could not stand before Moses. Thus we see in the case of Moses how evident it was that there was a power above all power of Magick which did appear in Moses. And so likewise in the case of our blessed Saviour; for although Simon Magnus, Apollonius or others might do some small things, or make some great show and noise by what they did; yet none of them ever came near the doing things of the same kind which our Saviour did, curing the born blind, restoring the dead to life after four dayes, and so as to live a considerable time after; or in the manner he did them, with a word, a touch, with that frequency and openness before his greatest enemies as well as followers, and in such an uncontrouled manner, that neither Jews or Heathens ever questioned the truth of them. And after all these, when he was laid in the grave after his crucifixion; exactly according to his own prediction, he rose again the third day, appeared frequently among his Disciples for forty dayes together. After which, in their presence, he ascended up to heaven, and soon after, made good his promise to them, by sending his holy Spirit upon them, by which they spake with tongues, wrought miracles, went up and down Preaching
8. 19.
9. 11.

Preaching the Gospel of Christ with great boldness, cheerfulness, and constancy, and after undergoing a great deal of hardship in it, they sealed the truth of all they spake with their blood, laying down their lives to give witness to it. Thus abundantly to the satisfaction of the minds of all good men hath God given the highest rational evidence of the truth of the doctrine which he hath revealed to the world. And thus I have finished the second part of my task, which concerned the rational evidence of the truth of Divine Revelation from the persons who were employed to deliver Gods mind to the world : And therein have, I hope, made it evident that both Moses and the Prophets, our Saviour and his Apostles did come with sufficient rational evidence to convince the world that they were persons immediately sent from God.

BOOK.



BOOK. III.

CHAP. I.

Of the Being of God.

The Principles of all Religion lie in the Being of God and immortality of the soul: from them the necessity of a particular Divine revelation rationally deduced; the method laid down for proving the Divine authority of the Scriptures. Wh. Moles doth not prove the Being of God, but suppose it. The notion of a Deity very consonant to reason. Of the nature of Idea's, and particularly of the Idea of God. How we can form an Idea of an infinite Being. How far such an Idea argues existence. The great unreasonableness of Atheism demonstrated. Of the Hypotheses of the Aristotelian and Epicurean Atheists. The Atheists pretences examined and refuted. Of the nature of the arguments whereby we prove there is a God. Of universal consent and the evidence of that to prove a Deity and immortality of souls. Of necessity of existence implied in the notion of God, and how far that proves the Being of God. The order of the world and usefulness of the parts of it, and especially of mans body an argument of a Deity. Some higher principle proved to be in the world than matter and motion. The nature of the soul, and possibility of its subsisting after death. Strange appearances in nature unsolvable by the power of imagination.

§. I.

HAVING in the precedent book largely given a rational account of the grounds of our faith, as to the persons whom God employes to reveal his mind to the world; if we can now make it appear that those sacred records which

which we embrace as *Divinely inspired*, contain in them nothing unworthy of so great a name, or unbecoming persons sent from God to deliver; there will be nothing wanting to justify our Religion in point of reason to be true, and of revelation to be Divine. For, the Scriptures themselves coming to us in the name of God, we are bound to believe them to be such as they pretend to be, unless we have ground to question the general foundations of all Religion as uncertain, or this particular way of Religion as not suitable to those general foundations. The foundations of all Religion lye in two things: that there is a God who rules the World, and that the souls of men are capable of subsisting after death; for, he that comes unto God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him; so, that if these things be not supposed as most agreeable to humane reason, we cannot imagine upon what grounds mankind should embrace any way of Religion at all. For, if there be not a God whom I am to serve and obey, and if I have not a soul of an immortal nature, there can be no sufficient obligation to Religion, nor motive inducing to it: For, all obligation to obedience must suppose the existence of such a Being which hath power to command me; and by reason of the promiscuous scatterings of good and evil in this life, the motives engaging men to the practice of Religion, must suppose the certainty of a future State. If these things be sure, and the foundations of religion in general thereby firmly established, it will presently follow as a matter most agreeable to reason, that the God whom we are to serve should himself prescribe the way of his own worship; and, if the right of donation of that happiness which mens souls are capable of be alone in himself, that he alone should declare the terms on which it may be expected; For, man being a creature endued with a free principle of acting, which he is conscious to himself of, and therefore not being carried to his end by necessity of nature or external violence, without the concurrence of his own reason and choyce, we must suppose this happiness to depend upon the performance of some conditions on mans part, whereby he may demonstrate that it is the matter of his free choyce, and that he freely quits all other Interests that he might obtain the enjoyment of it.

Hob. II. 6.

Which conditions to be performed being expressions of mans obedience towards God as his Creator and Governour, and of his *gratitude* for the tenders of so great a happiness which is the free gift of his Maker, we cannot suppose any one to have power to prescribe these conditions, but he that hath power likewise to deprive the soul of her happiness upon non-performance, and that must be God himself. But in order to mans understanding his duty and his obligation to obedience, it is necessary that these conditions must not be locked up in the Cabinet Council of Heaven, but must be so far declared and revealed, that he may be fully acquainted with those terms which his happiness depends upon; else his neglect of them would be excusable, and his misery unavoidable. Had man indeed remained without offending his Maker, he might still have stood in his favour upon the general terms of obedience due from the creature to his Creator, and to all such particular precepts which should bear the impress of his Makers will upon them, beside which, the whole volume of the Creation without, and his own reason within would have been sufficient directors to him in the performance of his duty. But he abusing his liberty, and being thereby guilty of Apostacy from God (as is evident by a continued propensity to sin, and the strangeness between God and the souls of men) a particular revelation is now become necessary, that mankind may thereby understand on what terms God will be pleased again, and by what means they may be restored into his favour. And lastly, it not agreeing with the free and communicative nature of Divine goodness (which was the first original of the worlds Creation) to suffer all mankind to perish in their own folly, we must suppose this way for mans recovery to be somewhere prescribed, and the revelation of it to be somewhere extant in the World. So that from the general principles of the existence of God and immortality of the soul, we have deduced by clear and evident reason the necessity of some particular Divine revelation, as the Standard and measure of Religion. And according to these principles we must examine what ever pretends to be of Divine revelation; for, it must be suitable to that Divine nature from whom it is supposed to come, and it must be agreeable

able to the conditions of the souls of men; and therefore that which carries with it the greatest evidence of *Divine Revelation*, is, a *faithful representation* of the State of the case between God and the souls of men, and a *Divine discovery* of those ways whereby mens souls may be fitted for eternal happiness. A *Divine Revelation* then must be *faithfull* and *true* in all its narrations; it must be *excellent* and *becoming* God in all its discoveries. And therefore all that can with any reason be desired for proof of the *Divine authority* of the *Scriptures* will lye in these three things. First, *That the foundations of Religion are of undoubted certainty, or that there is a God, and that mens souls are immortal.* Secondly, *That the Scriptures do most faithfully relate the matters of greatest antiquity therein contained (which do most concern the history of the breach between God and man.)* Thirdly, *That the Scriptures are the only authentick Records of those Terms on which happiness may be expected in another world.*

I begin with the first of them, which concerns the existence of God and immortality of the soul; both which seem to be supposed as general Prolepses in the writings of Moses, and as things so consonant to humane nature, that none to whom his writings should come could be supposed to question them. And therefore he spends no time in the operose proving of either of these, knowing to how little purpose his writings would be to such who denyed these first principles of all Religion. But beside this there may be these accounts given, why these main foundations of all Religion are no more insisted on in the first books of the Scripture which contain the originals of the world. First, *Because these were in the time of the writing of them believed with an universal consent of mankind.* In those more early dayes of the world, when the tradition of the first ages of it was more fresh and entire, it is scarce imaginable that men should question the Being of a God, when the history of the flood and the propagation of the world after it by the sons of Noah, and the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah were so fresh in their memories, as having been done so few Generations before them. And by what remains of any history of other Nations in those elder times men were

§. 2.

so far from *Atheism*, that *Polytheism* and *Idolatry* were the common practice of the World, as is most evident in all relations of the ancient *Chaldeans*, *Egyptians*, *Phoenicians*, and other Nations, who all supposed these two principles, as well as those who served the true God. And in all probability, as men are apt to run from one extrem to another, *Polytheism* was the first occasion of *Atheism*, and *Idolatry* of *irreligion*. And thence we finde the first appearance of *Atheists* to be in the most blind and superstitious age of Greece, when the obscene Poets had so debauched the common understandings of the people, as to make them believe such things concerning their Gods which were so incongruous to humane nature, that all who had any sense of goodness left, could not but loath and abhor such *Deities*. And therefore, we finde all the flouts and jeers of the reputed *Atheists* among them, such as *Dionysius*, *Diagoras*, *Theodorus*, *Euhemerus*, *Messenius*, and others, were cast upon their venerable *Deities*, which they so solemnly worshipped, who had been before, as *Euhemerus* plainly told them, poor mortal men, and those not of the best reputation neither: and therefore, as the *Epicurean* in *Tully* well sayes, *omnis eorum cultus esset in luctu*, the most suitable devotion for them had been lamenting their death. Now, when these common *Deities* were so much derided by intelligent men, and yet the order of the world seemed to tell them there was really a God, though those were none; those who had *Philosophical* wits, such as *Democritus* and *Epicurus*, set themselves to work to see if they could solve the *Phænomena* of Nature without a *Deity*, and therefore asserted the *Origin* of the Universe to be only by a fortuitous concurrence of infinite little particles; but herein they besotted themselves and their greedy followers, who were glad to be rid of those anxieties of mind which the thoughts of a *Deity* and an immortal soul did cause within them. And, although *Lucretius* in a bravado tells us of his Master, that when mens minds were sunk under the burden of Religion,

De Nat.
Deor. l. i.
cap. 38.

*Humana ante oculos scedd cum visa jaceret
In terra oppressa gravi sub religione:
Primum Crains homo mortalis tollere contrà
Est oculos ausus, primusque obfistere contrà.*

*De rerum
Nat. lib. 1.*

that Epicurus was the first true Giant who durst encounter the
gods, and if we believe him, overthrow them in open field;

*Quare religio pedibus subjecta vicissim
Obviritur, nos exaquat victoria caelo.*

Yet Cotta in Tully reports the issue of this battel quite other-
wise; for, although the greatest triumph in this victory had
been only to become like the beasts that perish; yet, if we
believe Cotta, Epicurus was so far from gaining any of his
beloved ease and pleasure by his sentiments, that never was
Labeo-boy more afraid of a Rod, nor did any enemy more
dread a Conqueror, then Epicurus did the thoughts of a God
and Death. *Nec quenquam vidi qui magis ex qua timenda*
se negaret, timeret; Mortem dico & Deos. So hard it is for
an Epicurean, even after he hath prostituted his conscience, to
silence it; but (whatever there be in the ayr) there is an
Elastic power in conscience that will bear its self up not-
withstanding the weight that is laid upon it. And yet after
all the labours of Epicurus, he knew it was to no purpose to
endeavour to root out wholly the belief of a Deity out of the
World, because of the unanimous consent of the World in it;
and therefore he admits of it as a necessary Prolepsis, or
Anticipation of humane nature, *quod in omnium animis
communem notionem impressisset ipsa natura*, that Nature its self
had stamped an Idea of God upon the minds of men; *cum enim
in insitum aliquo, aut more aut lege sit opinio constituta,*
*manet atque ad unum omnium firma consensio, intelligi necesse
est Deos esse, quoniam insitas eorum, vel potius innatas cogni-
tiones habeamus; de quo autem omnium natura consentis, id
verum esse necesse est,* as Velleius the Epicurean argues.
Once the belief of a Deity, neither rise from customs, nor was
created by Law, yet is unanimously assented to by all man-
kind;

*De Nat.
Deor. lib. 1.
cap. 86:*

*De Nat.
Deor. lib. 1.
cap. 44.*

kind; it necessarily follows that there must be a *Deity*, because the *Idea* of it is so *natural* to us. If it were thus acknowledged in the *Philosophical* age of *Greece*, when men bent their *wits* to unsettle the *belief* of such things as tended to *Religion*; how much more might it be esteemed a general principle of humane nature in those elder times, when not so much as one dissenter appeared that we read of among the more ancient Nations? But *secondly*, it was less needfull for *Moses* to insist much on the *proof* of a *Deity* in his *writings*, when his very employment and the *history* he wrote, was the greatest evidence that there was one. Could any of them question, whether there were a *God* or no, who had heard his *voice* at mount *Sinai*, and had received a *Law* from him, who had been present at so many *miracles* which were done by *Moses* in *Egypt* and the *Wilderness*? What more evident demonstration of *God* could be desired, than those many unparalleld *miracles*, which were wrought among them? And those who would not be convinced by them that there was a *God*, would certainly be convinced by nothing. *Thirdly*, It was unsuitable to the purpose of *Moses* to go about to prove any thing he delivered by the mere force of humane reason, because he writ as a person employed by *God*; and therefore by the arguments on which they were to believe his *Testimony* in what ever he writ, they could not but believe there was a *God* that employed him. And from hence it is, that *Moses* with so much *Majesty* and *Authority* begins the *History* of the *Creation* with, *In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth*. There could be no greater evidence that there was an infinitely wise, good, and powerful *God*; then that the *Universe* was produced out of nothing by him; and what reason could there be to distrust his *Testimony* who relates it, who manifested not only that there was a *God*, but that he was employed by him, by the *miracles* which he wrought: So, that all our former discourse concerning the evidences of *Divine Revelation*, are a most palpable demonstration of a *Deity*; for, if there be such a power which can alter the course of nature when he please, the Being wherein it is, must needs be Infinite; which is the same which we mean by *God*.

But yet for those whose minds are so coy and squeamish as to any thing of *Divine revelation*, we want not sufficient evidence in point of reason to prove to them the existence of a *Deity*. In order to which, I shall clear these following Propositions.

§. 3.

1. *That the true notion of a Deity is most agreeable to the faculties of mens souls, and most consonant to reason and the light of nature.*

2. *That those who will not believe that there is a God, do believe other things on far less reason, and must by their own principles deny some things which are apparently true.*

3. *That we have as certain evidence that there is a God, as it is possible for us to have, considering his nature.*

That the true notion of God is most agreeable to the faculties Prop. 1. of mens souls, and most consonant to reason and the light of nature, i. e. That the Idea of God, (or that which we conceive in our minds when we think of God) is so far from being any wayes repugnant to any principle of reason within us, that it is hard to pitch on any other notion which hath fewer intanglements in it, to a mind so far Metaphysical as to abstract from sense and prejudice. I grant it very difficult, nay impossible, for those to have any true settled notion of a God, who search for an Idea of him in their fancies, and were never conscious to themselves of any higher faculty in their souls then meer imagination. Such may have imaginem Jovis, or galeata Minerva, as he in Tully speaks, some Idea of an Idol in their minds, but none of a true God. For we may as soon come by the sight of colours to understand the nature of sounds, as by any corporal phantasms come to have a true Idea of God. And though sometimes an Idea be taken for that impression of things which is lodged in the Phantasie, yet here we take it in a more general sense, as it contains the representation of any thing in the mind; as it is commonly said in the Schools, that the Divine Intellect doth understand things by their Idea's, which are nothing else but the things themselves as they are objectively represented to the understanding. So that an Idea in its general sense in which we take it, is nothing else but the objective being of a thing as it terminates the understanding, and is the form of the

the act of *Intellection*: that which is then immediately presented to the mind in its perception of things, is the *Idea* or notion of it. Now, such an *Idea* as this is, may be either true or false. For better understanding of which, we must consider that an *Idea* in the soul may be considered two ways.

1. As it is a mode of cogitation, or the act of the soul apprehending an object; now this way no *Idea* can be false; for, as it is an act of the mind, every *Idea* hath its truth; for, whether I imagine a golden mountain or another, it matters not here; for the one *Idea* is as true as the other, considering it merely as an act of the mind. For, the mind is as really employed about the one as the other; as the will is about an object whether it be feasible or no.
2. The *Idea* may be considered in regard of its objective reality, for as it represents some outward object; now, the truth or falshood of the *Idea* lies in the understanding passing judgement concerning the outward object as existent which doth correspond to the *Idea* which is in the mind. And the prone-ness of the understandings error, in this case ariseth from the different nature of those things which are represented to the mind; for, some of them are general and abstracted things, and do not at all suppose existence, as the nature of truth, of a Being, of cogitation; other *Idea's* depend upon existence supposed, as the *Idea* of the Sun; which I apprehend in my mind because I have seen it; but besides these, there are other *Idea's* in the mind which the understanding forms within its self by its own power as it is a principle of cogitation, such are those which are called *entia rationis*, and have no other existence at all but only in the understanding, as *Chimara's*, *Centaur's*, &c. Now, as to these, we are to observe, that although the composition of these things together by the understanding, be that which makes these *Idea's* to be only fictitious, yet the understanding would not be able to compound such things, were they not severally represented to the mind; as, unlesse we had known what a horse and a man had been, our minds could not have conjoyned them together in its apprehension. So that in these which are the most fictitious *Idea's*, we see, that although the *Idea* its self be a meer creature of the understanding, yet the mind could not form such an *Idea* but upon pre-
existent

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exists matter, and some objective reality must be supposed in order to the intellectual conception of these *Anomalous entities*. By which we see that that strange kind of omniscience which some have attributed to the *understanding*, lies not in a power of conceiving things wholly impossible, or fancying *Idea's* of absolute *non-entities*, but in a kind of African copulation of such *Species* of things together, which in nature seem wholly impossible, (as the *Schools* speak) or have no congruity at all in the order of the *universe*. So that had there never been any such things in the world as matter and motion, it is very hard to conceive, how the *understanding* could have formed within its self the variety of the *Species* of such things, which are the results of those two grand principles of the *Universe*. But because it is so impossible for minds not very contemplative and *Metaphysical* to abstract from matter, thence it is we are apt to imagine such a power in the *understanding*, whereby it may form *Idea's* of such things which have no objective reality at all. I grant those we call *entia rationis* have no external reality as they are such; but yet I say, the existence of matter in the world, and the corporeal phantasms of outward Beings, are the foundation of the souls conception of those entities, which have no existence beyond the humane Intellect.

The great enquiry then is, How far this *Plastick* power of the *understanding*, may extend its self in its forming an *Idea* of God. That there is such a one in the minds of men, is evident to every one that consults his own faculties, and enquires of them, whether they cannot apprehend a settled and consistent notion of a Being which is absolutely perfect. For that is all we understand by the *Idea* of God; not that there is any such connate *Idea* in the *Soul*, in the sense which connate *Idea's* are commonly understood; but that there is a faculty in the *Soul*, whereby upon the free use of reason it can form within its self a settled notion of such a Being, which is as perfect as it is possible for us to conceive a Being to be. If any difficulty be made concerning the forming such a notion in ones mind, let the person who scruples it, only enquire of himself, whether he judges all Beings in the world equal; whether a *wasbrome* hath it in all the perfections which man

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hath? which I suppose *none*, who have a mind within them can question. If then it be granted that man hath some *perfections* in him above *inferiour creatures*, it will be no matter of difficulty to shew wherein man exceeds other *inferiour Beings*. For, is not life a greater *perfection* than the want of it? is not *reason* and *knowledge*, a *perfection* above *sense*? and so let us proceed to those things, wherein one man differs from another; for it is evident, that all men are not of *equal accomplishments*; Is not then *forecast* and *prudence* above *incogitancy* and *folly*? Is not the *knowledge* of *causes* of things better than *stupidity* and *ignorance*? Is not *beneficence* and *liberality* more noble than *parsimony* and *narrowness of spirit*? Is not true *goodness* far above *debauchery* and *intemperance*? And are not all these far better, when they are joyned with such a *power* as hath no *limits* or *bounds* at all? Now then it is not possible for a mans mind, proceeding in its ordinary way of *intellection*, to form a *notion* of such a *Being*, which hath *wisdom*, *goodness* and *power* in it, without any *limits* and *bounds* at all, or any of those *abatements* which any of these *perfections* are found with in man? For it is unconceivable, that the mind of man can attribute to its self *absolute perfection*, when it cannot but see its own *defects* in those things it excells other *creatures* in; and supposing it had *power*, *goodness* and *knowledge* far above what it hath; yet it cannot but say, that these *perfections* would be greater, if it were *always* possessed of them, and it were *impossible* that it should ever cease to be, or not have been. So that now joyning *infinite goodness*, *wisdom* and *power*, with *eternity* and *necessity* of *existence*, the result is the notion of a *Being absolutely perfect*. So that now, who ever questions the *suitableness* of such a *notion* or *Idea* to the *faculties* of mens *souls*, must question the *truth* of his own *faculties*, and the *method* they proceed in, in their clearest *conceptions* and *ratiocinations*. And the mind of man may as well question the *truth* of any *Idea* it hath within its self, as of this we now discourse of. Nay, it may be far sooner puzzled in any of those *Idea's*, which are transmitted into the *Phantasie* by the *impressions* of *corporeal Beings* upon the *Organs* of *sense*, then in this more *intellectual* and *abstracted*

fractured Idea, which depends wholly upon the mind.

All the difficulty now is, Whether this *Idea* of such an absolutely perfect Being, be any thing else but the understandings *Plastick power*, whereby it can unite all these perfections together in one conception, or doth it necessarily imply, that there must be such a Being really existent, or else I could never have formed such a settled notion of him in my mind? To this I answer, 1. It is as much as I desire at present, that the forming of such an *Idea* in the mind, is as suitable and agreeable to our faculties, as the forming the conception of any other Being in the world. For hereby it is most evident, that the notion of a God imports nothing incongruous to reason, or repugnant to the faculties of our souls; but that the mind will form as settled and clear a notion of God, as of any thing which in the judgement of Epicurus, his infallible senses did the most assure him of. So that there can be no shadow of a pretence, why any should reject the Being of a God, because of the impossibility to conceive any such Being as God is. If to this it be objected, That such things are implied in this *Idea*, which make it unconceivable, in that all the perfections in this Being are supposed to be infinite, and Infinity transcends our capacity of apprehension. To this I answer, 1. That those who deny Infinity in God, must necessarily attribute it to something else, as to infinite space, Infinity of successions of ages and persons, if the world were eternal; and therefore it is most unreasonable to reject any notion for that, which it is impossible; but if I deny that, I must attribute it to some thing else, to whose *Idea* it is far less proper than it is to Gods. 2. Left I should rather seek to avoid the argument than to satisfy it; I say, that though infinite as infinite cannot be comprehended, yet we may clearly and distinctly apprehend a Being to be of that nature, that no limits can be assigned to it, as to its power or presence; which is as much as to understand it to be infinite. The ratio formalis of Infinity, may not be understood clearly and distinctly, but yet the Being which is infinite may be. Infinity its self cannot be on this account, because, how ever positive we apprehend it, yet we alwayes apprehend it in a negative way, because we conceive it by denying all limitations and

bounds to it; but the *Being* which is *infinite*, we apprehend in a *positive manner*, although not *adequately*, because we cannot comprehend all which is in it. As we may clearly and distinctly see the *Sea*, though we cannot *discover* the bounds of it; so may we clearly and distinctly apprehend some *perfections* of *God* when we fix our minds on them, although we are not able to grasp them all together in our narrow and confined *Intellects*, because they are *Infinite*. Thus we see that *Gods Infinity* doth not at all abate the *clearness* and *distinctness* of the notion which we have of *God*; so that though the *perfections* of *God* are without bounds or limits, yet it bears no repugnancy at all to mens natural faculties to have a settled *Idea* of a *Being* *Ininitely perfect*, in their minds.

- §. 6. To the *Question* I answer, It seems highly probable and far more consonant to reason than the contrary, that this *Idea* of *God* upon the mind of man, is no merely *fictitious Idea*, but that it is really imprinted there by that *God* whose *Idea* it is, and therefore doth suppose a *reality* in the thing correspondent to that *objective reality* which is in the understanding. For, although I am not so well satisfied that the meer *objective reality* of the *Idea* of *God* doth exceed the efficiency of the mind, as that *Idea* is nakedly considered in its self, because of the unlimited power of the understanding in conception: Yet, I say, considering that *Idea* in all the circumstances of it it seems highly probable that it is no meer *ens rationis*, or figment of the understanding; and that will appear on these considerations. 1. This *Idea* is of such a nature as could not be formed from the understandings consideration of any corporeal phantasms. Because whatever hath any thing of matter in it, involves of necessity many imperfections along with it; for every part of matter is divisible into more parts. Now it is a thing evident to natural light, that it is a greater perfection not to be divisible, than to be so. Besides, corporeal phantasms are so far from helping us in forming this *Idea*, that they alone hinder us from a distinct conception of it, while we attend to them; because these bear no proportion at all to such a *Being*. So that this *Idea* however must be a pure act of Intuition, and therefore supposing there were no other fa-

culy in man but *imagination*, it would bear the greatest *repugnancy* to our *conceptions*, and it would be, according to the principles of *Epicurus* and some modern *Philosophers*, a thing wholly *impossible* to form an *Idea* of *God*, unless with *Epicurus* we imagine him to be *corporeal*, which is to say, he is no *God*. Which was the reason that *Tully* said, *Epicurus* did only *nomine ponere, re tollere Deos*, because such a notion of *God* is repugnant to natural light. So that if this *Idea* doth wholly abstract from *corporeal phantasms*, it thereby appears that there is a higher *faculty* in mans *Soul* than meer *imagination*; and it is hardly conceivable whence a *faculty* which thus extends its self to an *infinite object*, should come but from an *infinite Being*: especially if we consider, 2. That the *understanding* in forming this *Idea* of *God*, doth not by distinct *acts*, first collect one *perfection*, and then another, and at last unite these together, but the *simplicity* and *unity* of all these *perfections* is as necessarily conceived as any of them. Granting then that the *understanding* by the observing of several *perfections* in the world, might be able to abstract these severally from each *Being* wherein they were, yet whence should the *Idea* of the *unity* and *inseparability* of all these *perfections* come? The mind may, it is true, knit some *things* together in *fictional Ideas*, but then those are so far from *unity* with each other, that in themselves they speak mutual *repugnancy* to one another, which makes them proper *entia rationis*; but these several *perfections* are so far from speaking *repugnancy* to each other, that the *unity* and *inseparability* of them is as necessary to the forming of this *Idea*; as any other *perfection* whatsoever. So that from hence it appears, that the consideration of the *perfections* which are in the *creatures*, is only an occasion given to the mind to help it in its *Idea* of *God*, and not that the *Idea* its self depends upon those *perfections* as the *causes* of it; as in the clearest *Mathematical truths* the manner of *demonstration* may be necessary to help the *understanding* to its clearer *assent*, though the things in themselves be undoubtedly *true*. For all minds are not equally capable of the same *truths*; some are of quicker *apprehension* than others are; now, although to slower apprehensions a more particular way of *demon-*

fracting things be necessary, yet the *truths* in themselves are equal; though they have not equal evidence to several persons.

3. It appears that this is no meer *fictitious Idea* from the uniformity of it in all persons who have freed themselves from the entanglements of corporeal phantasms. Those we call *extrarationis*, we find by experience in our minds, that they are formed *ad placitum*; we may imagine them as many ways as we please; but we see it is quite otherwise in this *Idea of God*; for in those attributes or perfections which by the light of nature we attribute to God, there is an uniform consent in all those who have deusted their minds of corporeal phantasms in their conceptions of God. For while men have agreed that the object of their *Idea* is a Being absolutely perfect, there hath been no dissent in the perfections which have been attributed to it; none have questioned but infinite wisdom, goodness and power, joyned with necessity of existence, have been all implied in this *Idea*. So that it is scarce possible to instance in any one *Idea*, no not of those things which are most obvious to our senses, wherein there hath been so great an uniformity of mens conceptions, as in this *Idea of God*. And the most gross corporeal *Idea* of the most sensible matter hath been more liable to heats and disputes among Philosophers, than this *Idea* of a being Infinite and purely spiritual. Which strongly proves my present proposition, that this *Idea of God* is very consonant to natural light; for it is hardly conceivable that there should be so universal a consent of minds in this *Idea*, were it not a natural result from the free use of our reason and faculties. And that which adds further weight to this argument, is, that although Infinity be so necessarily implied in this *Idea of God*, yet men do not attribute all kind of Infinite things to God; for there being conceivable Infinite number, Infinite longitude, as well as Infinite power and knowledge, our minds readily attribute the latter to God, and as readily abstract the other from his nature, which is an argument this *Idea* is not fictitious, but argues reality in the thing correspondent to our conception of it. So much may suffice to clear the first proposition, viz. that the notion of a God is very suitable to the faculties

faculties of mens souls, and to that light of nature which they proceed by in forming the conceptions of things.

Those who deny that there is a God, do assert other things §. 7. on far less evidence of reason, and must by their own principles Prop. 2. deny some things which are apparently true. One would expect that such persons who are apt to condemn the whole world of folly in believing the truth of Religion, and would fain beadmired as men of a deeper reach, and greater wit and sagacity than others, would, when they have exploded a *Deity*, at least give us some more rational and consistent account of things, than we can give that there is a God. But on the contrary, we find the reasons on which they reject a *Deity* so lamentably weak, and so easily retorted upon themselves, and the hypotheses they substitute instead of a *Deity* so precarious, obscure and uncertain, that we need no other argument to evince the reasonableness of Religion, than from the manifest folly as well as impiety of those who oppose it. Which we shall make evident by these two things. 1. *That while they deny a Deity, they assert other things on far less reason.* 2. *That by those principles on which they deny a Deity, they must deny some things which are apparently true.*

1. *That they assert some things on far less reason than we do that there is a God.* For if there be not an infinitely powerful God, who produced the world out of nothing, it must necessarily follow according to the different principles of the Aristotelian and Epicurean Atheists, that either the world was as it is from all eternity, or else that it was at first made by the fortuitous concurrence of Atoms. Now I appeal to the reason of any person who hath the free use of it, Whether either of these two Hypotheses, urged with the same or greater difficulties; &c. be not far more weakly proved, than the existence of a *Deity* is, or the production of the world by him.

1. *They run themselves into the same difficulties which they would avoid in the belief of a Deity;* and nothing can be a greater evidence of an intangled mind than this is: To deny a thing because of some difficulty in it, and instead of it to assert another thing which is chargeable with the very same difficulty in a higher degree. Thus when they reject a *Deity*, because

because they cannot understand what *Infinity* means; both these *Hypotheses* are liable to the same intricacy in apprehending the nature of something *Infinite*. For according to the *Epicureans*, there must be an *Infinite space*, and what greater ease to the mind is there in conceiving an *Idea* of that, than of an *Infinite Being*. And if the world be eternal, there must have been past an *Infinite succession* of ages, and is not the understanding as easily lost in this, as in an eternal *Being* which created the world? For if the course of *Generations* in the world had no beginning at all, (which necessarily follows upon the eternity of the world) then an infinite number of successions are already past, and if past, then at an end; and so we find an *Infinite* which hath had an end, which is a consequence becoming one who avoids the belief of a *Deity*, because *Infinity* is an unconceivable thing. Besides, if the number of *Generations* hath been *Infinite*, these two consequences will unavoidably follow, which the reason of any one but an *Atheist* would startle at, that one *Infinite* may be greater than another, and that the part is equal to the whole. For, let him fix where he please in the course of *Generations*, I demand, whether in the *Great grand-fathers* time the succession of *Generations* was finite or *Infinite*; if finite, then it had a beginning; and so the world not eternal; if infinite, then I ask, Whether there were not a longer succession of *Generations* in the time of his *Great grand-children*; and so there must be a number greater than that which was *Infinite*; for the former succession was *Infinite*, and this hath more *Generations* in it than that had; but if it be said that they were equal, because both *Infinite*, then the succession of *Generations* to the *Grand-father*, being but a part of that which extends to his *grand-children* and posterity, the part is equal to the whole. And is not now the notion of an *Infinite Being* enough to stumble an *Atheist's* reason, when it can so nimbly leap over so apparent contradictions? I insist not on this as an evident demonstration to prove a *Deity*, which possibly it may not amount to, because it may only demonstrate the impossibility of our understandings comprehending the nature of *Infinity*. But however it doth most evidently demonstrate the folly and unreasonableness of the *Atheist* who rejects

rejects the *Being* of God on the account of his *Infinity*, when his understanding is more *lost* in apprehending an *infinite* succession of *Generations*, which follows from his *supposition* of the *eternity* of the world. If then it be *impossible*, as it is, upon any *principles* whatsoever, to avoid the conception of somewhat *infinite* and *eternal*, either *matter* or *space*, or *form*: *Being*, let any one appeal to his own *reason*, whether it be not more *agreeable* to that, to attribute these *perfections* to such a *Being* to whose *Idea* they necessarily *belong*, than to *attribute* them to this *world* in whose *conception* they are not at all implied; but on the contrary, they do far more *puzzle* our *understandings*, than when we conceive them to be in *God*: If somewhat must have a continued *duration*, and be of an *unbounded nature*, how much more *rational* is it to conceive *wisdom*, *power*, and *goodness* to be conjoined with *eternity* and *infinity*, than to bestow these attributes upon an empty *space*, or upon dull and unactive *matter*? It cannot be *reason* then, but some more *base* and *unworthy* principle which makes the *Atheist* question the *Being* of *God*, because his *perfections* are *unconceivable*, when according to his own *principles* the most *puzzling* attributes of *God* return upon him with more *force* and *violence*, and that in a more *inexplicable* manner.

As the *Atheist* must admit those things himself which he rejects the *Being* of *God* for, so he admits them upon far *waker* grounds than we do *attribute* them to *God*. If a *thing* may be made evident to *mans* natural *reason* concerning the *existence* of a *Being* so *infinite* as *God* is, we doubt not but to make it appear that we have great *assurance* of the *Being* of *God*; but how far must the *Atheist* go, how *heartily* must he *beg* before his *Hypothesis* either of the *fortuitous* *concourse* of *Atoms*, or *eternity* of the *world* will be granted to him. For if we stay till he *proves* either of these by *evident* and *demonstrative reasons*, the *world* may have an end before he *proves* his *Atoms* could give it a *beginning*; and we may find it *eternal*, *a parte post*, before he can prove it was so *a parte ante*. For the proof of a *Deity*, we appeal to his own *faculties*, *reason* and *conscience*; we make use of *arguments* before his eyes: we bring the *universal sense* of *man-*

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2.

kind along with us: But for his principles, we must wholly alter the present *stage* of the world, and crumble the whole *Universe* into little particles; we must grind the *sun* to powder, and by a new way of interment turn the earth into dust and ashes, before we can so much as imagine how the world could be framed. And when we have thus far begged leave to imagine things to be what they never were, we must then stand by in some infinite space to behold the friskings and dancings about of these little particles of matter, till by their frequent rancounters and jostlings one upon another, they at last link themselves together, and run so long in a round, till they make whirl-pools enough for *sun*, *Moon*, and *Stars*, and all the bodies of the *Universe* to emerge out of. But what was it which at first set these little particles of matter in motion? Whence came so great variety in them to produce such wonderful diversities in bodies as there are in the world? How came these casual motions to hit so luckily into such admirable contrivances as are in the *Universe*? When once I see a thousand blind men run the point of a sword in at a key-hole without one missing; when I find them all frisking together in a spacious field; and exactly meeting all at last in the very middle of it; when I once find, as *Tully* speaks, the *Annals* of *Ennius* fairly written in a heap of sand, and as *Keplers* wife told him, a room full of herbs moving up and down, fall down into the exact order of fallst, I may then think the *Atomical Hypothesis* probable, and not before. But what evidence of reason, or demonstration have we that the great bodies of the world did result from such a motion of these small particles? It is possible to be so, saith *Epicurus*; What if we grant it possible? Can no things in the world be, which it is possible might have been otherwise? What else thinks *Epicurus* of the Generations of things now? they are such certainly as the world now is, and yet he believes it was once otherwise: Must therefore a bare possibility of the contrary make us deny our reason, silence, conscience, contradict the universal sense of mankind by excluding a *Deity* out of the world? But whence doth it appear possible? Did we ever find any thing of the same nature with the world produced in such a manner by such a con-

course of Atoms? Or is it because we find in *natural Beings*, how much these particles of matter serve to solve the *Phænomena of nature*? But doth it at all follow, because now under *Divine Providence* which wisely orders the world, and things in it, that these particles, with their several affections and motion, may give us a tolerable account of many appearances as to bodies, that therefore the *Universe* had its origin merely by a concretion of these without any *Divine hand* to order and direct their motion? But of this more, when we come to the creation of the world; our design now is only to compare the notion of a *Deity*, and of the *Atheists Hypothesis* in point of perspicuity and evidence of reason: of which let any one who hath reason judge. Thus we see how the *Atheist* in denying a *Deity*, must assert something else instead of it, which is pressed with the same, if not greater difficulties, and proved by far less reason.

The *Atheist* by the same principles on which he denies a God, must deny some things which are apparently true. Which will be evident by our running over the most plausible pretences which he insists upon. §. 9.
2.

1. Because the *Being of God* cannot be demonstrated. But how doth the *Atheist* mean it? Is it because God cannot be demonstrated to sense, that we cannot *digito monstrari & dicier hic est*, point at him with our fingers? It is a sign there is little of reason left, where sense is made the only *Umpire* of all kinds of *Beings*. Must all *Intellectual Beings* be prescribed out of the order of *Nature*, because they cannot pass the scrutiny of sense? And by the same reason all colours shall be dashed out because they cannot be heard; all noises silenced because they cannot be seen; for why may not one sense be set to judge of all objects of sense with far more reason, than sense its self be set as judge over intellectual *Beings*? But yet it is wisely done of the *Atheist* to make sense his judge; for if we once appeal to this, he knows our cause is lost; for as he said of a *Physician*, when one asked him, whether he had any experience of him, no, said he, *Si periculum fecissem, non viverem*; If I had tryed him, I had been dead ere now; so here, If God were to be tryed by the judgement of sense, he must cease to be God; for how can an infinite and

Spiritual Being be discerned by the judgement of *sense*, and if he be not an *infinite* and *Spiritual Being*, he is not *God*. But it may be the *Atheist's* meaning is not so gross, but he intends such a demonstration to reason, as that two and two make four, or that the whole is greater than the parts; with such a demonstration he would sit down contented. But will no less than this serve him? What becomes then of the worlds being made by a fortuitous concourse of *Atoms*? Is this as evident, as that two and two make four? And will the *Philosophical Atheist* really believe nothing in nature, but what is as evident to him in material Beings, as that the whole is greater than the parts? By any means let *Atheists* then write *Philosophy*, that at last the *Clocks* in *London* may strike together, and the *Philosophers* agree; for I suppose none of them question that. But yet it is possible the *Atheist* may in a good humour abate something of this, and mean by demonstration such a proof as takes away all difficulties. If he means as to the ground of assent, we undertake it; if as to the object apprehended, we reject it as unreasonable, because it is impossible a Being infinite should be comprehended by us; for if it could, it were no longer infinite. But let us try this principle by other things, and how evident is it, that on this account some things must be denied, which himself will confess to be true? for instance, that opprobrium *Philosophorum*, the divisibility of quantity, or extended matter into finite and infinite parts; let him take which side he please, and see whether by the force of the arguments on either side, if he hold to this principle, he must not be forced to deny that there is any such thing as matter in the world: and then we may well have an infinite empty space, when by the force of this one Principle, both God and matter are banished quite out of the world. But if the *Atheist* will but come one step lower, and by his demonstration intend nothing else but such a sufficient proof of it, as the nature of the thing is capable of, he will not only speak most consonantly to reason, but may be in some hopes of gaining satisfaction. For it is most evident, that all things are not capable of the like way of proof, and that in some cases the possibility of the contrary must be no hindrance to an undoubted assent. What these proofs are, will appear

appear afterwards. I come to the next ground of the *Atheist's* opinion, which is,

2. *The weaknesse of some arguments brought to prove a Deity.* But let us grant that some arguments will not do it, Doth it therefore follow that none can do it? What if some have proved the *Sun* to be the center of the world, and the motion of the earth, by very weak arguments, Will the *Atheist* therefore question it? What if *Epicurus* had proved his *Atomical Hypothesis* by some silly *Sophisms*, Will the *Atheist* therefore rather believe the creation of the world than it? What if the *Atheist* may make himself sport at some stories of apparitions insisted on to prove a *Deity*, Doth it therefore follow there is no God, because some persons have been overcredulous? What if some having more zeal than knowledge, may attribute such things to Gods immediate hand, which may be produced by natural causes, Doth it thence follow that God hath no hand in governing the world at all? What if fears, and hopes, and persuasions, may depend much on principles of education; must conscience then be resolved wholly into these? What if some devout melancholist may embrace the issues of his own imagination for the impressions of the *Divine Spirit*, Doth it therefore follow, that Religion is nothing but strength of fancy improved by principles of education? What if some of the numerous proofs of a *Deity* were cut off, and only those made use of, which are of greatest force, Would the truth suffer at all by that? I grant, advantage is often taken against a thing more by one weak argument brought for it, than for it by the strongest proofs: but I say, it is unreasonable it should be so; and were men rational and ingenuous, it would not be so. Many times arguments may be good in their order, but they are mis-placed; some may prove the thing rational, which may not prove it true; some may shew the absurdity of the adversaries rejecting the thing, which may be not sufficient to prove it; now when men number, and not weigh their arguments, but give them in the lump to the main question, without fitting them to their several places, they do more dis-service to the main of the battle by the disorder of their forces, than they can advantage it by the number of them.

3. Another great pretence the *Atheist* hath, is, that *Religion* is only an invention of *Politicians*, which they awe people with as they please, and therefore tell them of a *God* and another world; as *Mothers* send young children to school to keep them in better order, that they may govern them with the greater ease. To this I answer, 1. *Religion*, I grant, hath a great influence upon the well governing the world, nay so great, that were the *Atheists* opinion true, and the world perswaded of it, it were impossible the world could be well governed. For the *Government* of the world in civil societies, depends not so much on force, as the sacred bonds of duty and allegiance which hold a Nation that owns *Religion* as true, in far surer obligations to endeavour the peace and welfare of a Nation than ever violence can do. For in this case, only an opportunity is watched for to shake off that which they account a yoke upon their necks, whereas, when mens minds are possessed with a sense of duty and obligation to obedience out of conscience, the reins may be held with greater ease; and yet the people be better managed by them, than by such as only gall and inrage them. So that I grant true *Religion* to be the most serviceable principle for the governing of civil societies; but withall, I say, 2: It were impossible *Religion* should be so much made use of for the governing of people, were there not a real propensity and inclination to *Religion* imprinted on the minds of men. For as, did not men love themselves and their children, their estates and interests, it were impossible to keep them in obedience to *Laws*; but doth it follow, because *Magistrates* perswade people to obedience, by suiting *Laws* to the general interest of men, that therefore the *Magistrates* first made them love themselves and their own concerns? So it is in *Religion*, the *Magistrate* may make use of this propensity to *Religion* in men for civil ends, but his making use of it doth suppose it and not insill it. For were *Religion* nothing else in the world but a design only of *Politicians*, it would be impossible to keep that design from being discovered at one time or other; and when once it came to be known, it would hurry the whole world into confusion; and the people would make no scruple of all oaths and obligations, but every one would seek to do
 others,

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others what mischief he could if he had opportunity, and obey no further then fear and force constrained him. Therefore no principle can be so dangerous to a state as *Atheism*, nor any thing more promote its peace than true *Religion*; and the more men are persuaded of the truth of *Religion*, they will be the better subjects, and the more useful in civil societies. As well then may an *Atheist* say, there is no such thing as good nature in the world because that is apt to be abused, nor any such thing as love, because that may be cheated, as that *Religion* is nothing but a design, because men may make it stalk to their private ends. Thus we see how the *Atheist* by the force of those principles on which he denies a God, must be forced to deny other things, which yet by his own confession are apparently true.

So I come to the third Proposition, which is, *That we have* §. 10.
as certain evidence that there is a God, as we can have consider- Prop. 3.
ing his nature. When we demand the proof of a thing, our first eye must be to the nature of the thing which we desire may be proved; For things equally true, are not capable of equal evidence, nor have like manners of probation. There is no demonstration in *Euclide* will serve to prove that there are such places as the *Indies*: we cannot prove the earth is round by the judgement of sense; nor that the *Soul* is immortal by corporeal phantasms. Every distinct kind of Being hath its peculiar way of probation; and therefore it ought not to bear all wondred at, if the *Supreme* and infinite Being have his peculiar way of demonstrating himself to the minds of men. If then we have as evident proofs of the existence of God, as we can have, considering the Infinity of his nature, it is all which in reason we can desire; and of that kind of proofs we have these following; For, 1. If God hath stamped an universal character of himself upon the minds of men. 2. If the things in the world are the manifest effects of infinite wisdom, goodness and power. 3. If there be such things in the world which are unaccountable without a Deity; then we may with safety and assurance conclude; that there is a God.

1. *That God hath imprinted an universal character of himself on the minds of men; and that may be known by two things.*

things. 1. If it be such as bears the same importance among all persons. 2. If it be such as cannot be mistaken for the character of anything else.

1. I begin with the first, whereby I shall prove this character to be universal, because the whole world hath consented in it. This argument we may rely on with the greater security, because it was the only argument which retained the Deity in the ancient School of Epicurus; which, could he have thought of a easie way of evading it, as he thought he had found out as to the Origine of the universe, he was no such great friend to the very name of a God, as to have retained it as an Anticipation or Prolepsis of humane nature. And this argument from the universal consent of the world, was that which bore the greatest sway among the Philosophers, who went by nothing but dictates of natural light, which they could not so clearly discover in any things, as in those which all mankind did unanimously consent in. Two things I shall make out this by. 1. That no sufficient account can be given of so universal a consent, unless it be supposed to be the voice of nature. 2. That the dissent of any particular persons is not sufficient to controul so universal an agreement.

1. That no sufficient account of it can be given, but only by asserting it to be a dictate of nature. In so strange a dissent as there hath been in the world concerning most of those things which relate to mankind in common, as the models of governments, the Laws they are ruled by, the particular rites and customs of worship; we have the greatest reason to judge that those common principles which were the foundations on which all these several different customs were built, were not the effect of any positive Laws, nor the meer force of principles of education, but something which had a deeper root and foundation in the principles of nature its self. A common and universal effect must flow from some common and universal cause. So the Stoick argues in Tully, *If there were no God, non tam stabilis opinio permaneret, nec confirmaretur diuturnitate temporis, nec una cum seculis atationisque hominum vivere potuisset.* It is strange to think that mankind in so many ages of the world should not grow wise enough to rid

De Nat.
Deor. 6.2.

it felt of so troublesome an opinion as that was, of the *Being of God*, had it not been true.

We see in all the alterations of the World, other vain opinions have been detected, refuted and shaken off; if this had been such, how comes it to remain the same in all Ages and Nations of the World? *Opinionum commenta delet dies, natura judicia confirmat*. It is a great discredit to *Time* to make it like a River in that sense, that it bears up only lighter things, when matters of greatest weight are sunk to the bottom and past recovery; This may pass for a handiom allusion, as to the opinions and writings of particular persons, but cannot be understood of such things which are founded on the universal consent of the World; for these common notions of humane nature are so suited to the temper of the World, that they pass down the strong current of *Time* with the same facility that a well-built ship, though of good burden, doth surrow the Ocean. So that if we must adhere to the Allegory, it is easily rep'ied, that it is not the weights of things which makes them sink, but the unsuitableness of their superficies to that of the water; so, we see a small piece of wood will sink, when a stately ship is born up; so, such things which have not that agreeableness in them to the dictates of Nature may soon be lost, but such as lye so even upon the superficies of the soul, will still float above the water, and never be lost in the swiftest current of Time. Thus we assert this universal consent of mankind, as to the existence of a Deity, to be a thing so conforant to our natural reason, that as long as there are men in the World, it will continue.

But now it is hardly conceivable, according to the Principles of Epicurus, how mankind should universally agree in some common sentiments; much less how it should have such an anticipation as himself grants of the *Being of God*. For, if the soul be nothing else but some more active and vigorous particles of matter (as Diogenes Laertius tells us, that his opinion was, that the soul was nothing else but a Systeme of the most smooth and round atoms) if so, it is very hard apprehending how any such things as anticipations or commotions can be lodged in

§. II.

Lib. 10. in
v. Epic.
v. Gassend.
Tom. 1. 3.
sect. 3.

the soul? For, if our souls be nothing else but some small spherical corpuscles which move up and down the body, as the Epicurean Philosophy supposeth, then all our knowledge and perception must depend on motion, which motion must be by the impression of external objects; which Lucretius acknowledges and contends for.

Lib. 4.

*Invenies primis à sensibus esse creatam
Notitiam veri.*

De Nat.

Deor. lib. 1.

If then our knowledge of truth comes in by our senses, and sensation doth wholly depend upon the impression of outward objects, what becomes of all common notions and of the Prophecy of a Deity? unlesse we suppose the knowledge of a Deity came in by sense, which Epicurus himself denies when he attributes to the Deity not corpus, but quasi corpus, as Tully tells us, and therefore he is not a proper object of sense. So that it is impossible there should be any such thing as a natural notion which may be the ground of universal consent among men, according to the doctrine of Epicurus. And therefore it stands to all reason in the world, that if our senses be the only competent judges of truth, men should differ about nothing more then such things which cannot be tryed by the judgement of sense; Such as the notion of a God is; (for where should men be more uncertain in their judgements, then in such things which they have no rule at all to go by in the judging of?) but we are so far from finding it so, that men are nothing so much agreed about the objects of sense, as they are about the existence of a Deity; and therefore we see this universal consent of mankind concerning a God, cannot be saved by the principles of those who deny it; according to which no account at all can be given of any such things as universal or common notions.

§. 12.

Neither can this universal consent of mankind be enervated with any greater probability by those Atheists who assert the eternity of the world, and resolve this consent wholly into meer tradition, such as the Fables of Poets were conveyed in from one to another. For I demand concerning this tradition, Whether

Whether ever it had any *beginning* or no? If it had no *beginning*, it could be no *tradition*; for, that must run up to some *persons* from whom it first came; Again, if it had no *beginning*, it was *necessary* that it should *always* be, on the same accounts on which they make the *World* eternal. And, if it be *necessary*, it must be *antecedent* to any free *act* of *man*s will which *tradition* supposeth; and so some false opinion would be found to be as *necessary* as the *Worlds* being eternal, (and by consequence, the *Worlds* being eternal may be a *necessary* false opinion) but, if any false opinion be once granted *necessary*, it then follows that our *faculties* are not true, and that *Nature* is a necessary cause of some notorious *falsety*, which is the highest impeachment the *Atheist* could have laid upon his only adored *nature*; which must then have done that, (which *Aristotle* was ashamed to think ever *Nature* should be guilty of) which is *something* in vain; for, to what purpose should man have *rational faculties*, if he be under an unavoidable necessity of being deceived? If then it be granted that this *tradition* had once a *beginning*, either it began with *humane nature*, or *humane nature* did exist long before it: If it began with *mankind*, then *mankind* had a *beginning*, and so the *world* was not eternal; if *mankind* did exist before this *tradition*, I then enquire in what *time*, and by what means came this *tradition* first to be embraced, if it doth not suppose the existence of a *Deity*? Can any age be mentioned in *History*, wherein this *tradition* was not universally received? and which is most to our purpose, the further we go back in *history*, the fuller the *world* was of *Deities*, if we believe the *Heathen histories*; but however, no age can be instanced in, wherein this *tradition* began first to be believed in the *World*; we can trace the *Poetick Fables* to their true original, by the testimonies of those who believed them; we know the particular *Authors* of them, and what course they took in divulging of them; we find great diversities among themselves in the meaning of them, and many *Nations* that never heard of them. But all things are quite otherwise in this *tradition*; we have none to fix on as the first *Authors* of it; if the *world* were eternal, and the belief of a *Deity* fabulous, we cannot understand by what artifice a fabulous

tradition could come to be so universally received in the World, that no Nation of old could be instanced in by the *inquisitive Philosophers*, but however rude and barbarous it was, yet it owned a *Deity*. How could such a *tradition* be spread so far, but either by *force* or *fraud*? it could not be by *force*, because embraced by an unanimous consent where no force at all hath been used, and hath been so rooted in the very *natures* of those people who have been most tender of their *liberties*, that they have resented no indignity so highly, as any affronts they conceived to be offered to their gods. Nay, and where any persons would seem to quit the belief of a *Deity*, we find what force and violence they have used to their own reason and conscience to bring themselves to *Atheisme*, which they could not subdue their minds to any longer then the will could command the understanding, which when it gained but a little liberty to examine it self, or view the world, or was alarmed with thunder, earth quakes, or violent sickness, did bring back again the sense of a *Deity* with greater force and power then they had endeavoured to shake it off with. Now, had this *tradition* come by force into the World, there would have been a secret exultation of mind to be freed from it, as we see Nature rejoiceth to shake off every thing which is violent, and to settle every thing according to its due order. It is only fraud then which can be with any reason imagined in this case; and, how unreasonable it is to imagine it here, will appear to any one who doth consider how extremely jealous the world is of being imposed upon by the subtilty of such who are thought to be the greatest Politicians. For, the very opinion of their subtilty makes men apt to suspect a design in every thing they speak or do, so that nothing doth more generally hinder the entertaining of any notion so much among vulgar people, as that it comes from a person reputed very politic. So, that the most politic way of gaining upon the apprehensions of the vulgar, is by taking upon one the greatest appearance of simplicity and integrity; and, this now could not be done by such Politicians which we now speak of, but by accommodating themselves to such things in the people which were so consonant to their natures, that they could suspect no design at

all in the matters propounded to them. And thus I assert it to have been in the present case, in all those Politick Governors who at first brought the world into both civil and Religious Societies, after they were grown rude and barbarous; for, as it had been impossible to have brought them into Civil Societies, unless there had been supposed an inclination to Society in them, so it had been equally impossible to have brought them to embrace any particular way of Religion, unless there had been a natural propensity to Religion implanted in them, and founded in the general belief of the existence of a Deity. And therefore, we never find any of the ancient founders of Commonwealths go about to persuade the people, that there was a God; but this they supposed and made their advantage of it, the better to draw the people on to embrace that way of worship which they delivered to them, as most suitable to their own design. And this is plainly evident in the vast difference of designs and interests which were carried on in the Heathen world upon this general apprehension of a Deity. How came the world to be so easily abused into Religions of all shapes and fashions, had not there been a natural inclination in mens souls to Religion, and an indelible Idea of a Deity on the minds of men? Were then this propensity groundless, and this Idea fictitious, it were the greatest flurr imaginable which could be cast upon Nature, that when the instincts of irrational agents argue something real in them; only man, the most noble Being of the visible world, must be fatally carried to the belief of that which never was. Which yet hath so great a force and awe upon man, that nothing creates so great anxieties in his life as this doubt, nothing lays him more open to the designs of any who have an intent to abuse him. But yet further, these Politicians who first abused the world in telling them there was a God, did they themselves believe there was a God or no? If they did, then they had no such end as abusing the world into such a belief. If they did not, upon what accounts did they believe there was none, when the people were so ready to believe there was one? Was that as certain a tradition before that there was no God, as afterwards they made it to be that there was? If so, then all those people whom they persuaded

to believe there was a God, did before, all believe there was none, and how can it possibly enter into the reason of any man to think, that people who had been brought up in the belief that there was no God at all, nor any state after this life, should all unanimously quit the principles of education which tended so much to their ease & pleasure here, to believe there was a God and another life, and thereby to fill themselves full of fears and disquietments: meerly because their Rulers told them so? Again, If these Rulers themselves were so wise as not to believe a Deity, can we imagine there ever was such an age of the world wherein it fell out so happily, that only the Rulers were wise, and all the subjects fools? But it may be, it will be said, that all who were wise themselves did not believe a Deity, but yet consented to the practice of Religion, because it was so useful for the Government of mankind; but, can it be thought that all these wise men which we must suppose of several ranks and degrees, (for Philosophers are not alwayes States-men, nor States-men Philosophers) should so readily concurr in such a thing which tended most to the Interest of the Prince, and to the abuse of the world? Would none of them be ready to assert the truth, though it were but to make a party of their own, and discover to the people, that it was only the ambition and design of their Governours which sought to bring the people to slavery by the belief of such things which were contrary to the tradition of their fore-fathers, and would make their lives, if they believed them, continually troublesome and unquiet? Or, if we could suppose things should hit thus in one Nation, what is this to the whole World which the Atheist here supposeth eternal? What, did all the Rulers of the world exactly agree in one moment of time, or at least in one age thus to abuse the World? Did the designs of Governours and the credulity of all people fall out to be so suitable together? But on the contrary, we do not find that Governours can have the judgments of people so at their command, that they can make them to believe what they please; if it were so, we may well say with the Atheistical Pope, *Hec quam minimo regitur mundus*, What a twine-thread will rule the world! But, granting these things, (which any but an Atheist will say are impossible)

possible) yet whence should it come to pass that the world which is generally led more by the opinion of their forefathers than by reason, should so cancel that former tradition that there was no God, that no remaining foot steps of it can be traced in any history of those times? Or did the Governors all consent to abolish all records of it? Publick and written I grant they might, but not those out of mens minds and memories; which would have been for the ease of the minds of their posterity conveyed in some secret Cabala from Fathers to their Children. It may be it will be said, *So it was, but men durst not profess it for fear of the Laws*; but, it is not evident that the Laws of all the ancient Common-wealths were so severe against *Atheism*; and withall, how came some of the wisest and most Philosophical men of Greece and Rome to embrace the existence of a Deity as a thing far more consonant to reason than the contrary opinion, and established their belief on such evidences from nature itself, that none of their Antagonists were able to answer them? It was not certainly the fear of Laws which made men rational and inquisitive into the natures and causes of things, and yet those who were such amidst the great Idolatries of the Heathen, and being destitute of divine Revelation, yet freely and firmly asserted to the existence of a Deity. Had it been only fraud and imposture which brought men to believe a God, whence came it to pass that this fraud was not discovered by these Philosophers, who were far better able by their nearness to those eldest times, and much converse abroad in other Nations (for some travelled into Egypt, Chaldea, Persia, India, meerly to gain knowledge) to have found out such an Imposture, had it been such, than any of our modern Atheists? Whence come these now in this almost decrepitate age of the world to be the first smellers out of so great a design? By what means, what tokens and evidence came such an Imposture to their knowledge? Because, forsooth, the world is still apt to be abused by a pretence of Religion; but, he that doth not see how silly and ridiculous a Sophism that is, either by his own reason, or by what hath gone before, hath wit and reason little enough to be an Atheist. Some therefore who would seem a little wiser than the vulgar sort of Atheists, (for it seems there

is a *vulgaris* among them too, I wish it be more for their *meanness* than *multitude*) are so far convinced of the *unreasonableness* of judging that the belief of a *Deity* came in by *fraud*, that finding it so *general* and *universal*, they attribute it to as *general* and *universal* a *cause* which is the *Influence* of the *Stars*. So true still is that of the *Poet*, *Cælum ipsum peccatum stultitia*; for, by what imaginable *influence* come the *stars* to plant opinions in *mens minds* so deeply and *universally*? But yet further, Is this *opinion* which is thus cau'd by the *Stars*, *true* or *false*? if the *opinion* be *true*, we have what we desire; if *false*, what malignant *Influence* is this of the *Stars* so powerfully to *sway* men to the *belief* of a *falsety*? How far are the *Stars* then from doing *good* to mankind, when they are so *influential* to *deceive* the *World*; but then, by what *peculiar Influence* come some men to be freed from this *general Imposture*? If the *cause* be so *universal*, the *effect* must be *universal* too. But, if only the *Nativity* and *continuance* of some particular *Religions* may be *calculated* by the *Stars*, (as *Cardan* and *Vaninus* *Atheistically* suppose) whence then comes the *general propensity* and *inclination* to *Religion* in all *Ages* and *Nations* of the *World*? If it be then *caused* by the *Heavens* in *general*, it must be produced *necessarily* and *universally*, and so to be an *Atheist*, were *impossible*; if it be *caused* by the *influence* of some particular *Stars*, then when that *Influence* ceaseth, the *world* would *universally* relapse into *Atheism*. So, that there is no possible way of *avoiding* this *universal consent* of mankind, as an *argument* that there is a *God*, when all the *pretences* of the *Atheist* against it are so *weak*, *ridiculous*, and *impertinent*.

- §. 13. The only thing then left for him, is, to deny the *truth* of the thing, *viz.* that there is such an *universal consent*; because some persons have been found in the *world* who have not agreed with the rest of mankind in this *opinion*. To this I answer, (which was the second particular for clearing this Argument) that the *dissent* of these persons is not sufficient to manifest the *consent* not to be *universal*, and to arise from a *dictate* of *Nature*. For I demand of the greatest *Atheist*, Whether it be sufficient to say, that it is not *natural* for men to have two legs, because some have been born with one; or, that it is

not natural for men to *desire life*, (which the *Atheist* loves so dearly) because there have been so many who have taken away their *own lives*? If it be said that these are *Monsters* and *Anomalies* in nature, and therefore not to be reckoned in the regular account of things, the same I may with as great reason say of *Atheists*, that they are to be disjuncted out of the *Census* of such who act upon free principles of reason; because there may be some peculiar reasons given of their dissent from the rest of mankind in the *denial* of a *Deity*. We see by the old *Philosophers* how far the affectation of *Novelty*, and ambition of being cryed up for no vulgar wits, may carry men to deny such things which are most common and obvious in the world. Is there any thing more plain and evident to reason, then that it implies a contradiction for the same thing to be and not to be at the same time? and yet if we believe *Aristotle*, who largely disputes against them, εἰς δὲ τὴν αὐτὴν τὴν ἐκείνου χρόνον τὸ αὐτὸ ἔστι καὶ οὐκ ἔστι, *There were some who affirmed that a thing might be and not be at the same time*. What is so evident in nature as motion, yet the *Philosopher* is well known who disputed against it, and thought himself *subtile* in doing so too? What are men more assured of, then that they *live*, and yet (if it be not too *dogmatical*, even in that to believe the *Scepticks*) it was a thing none could be assured of? What are our senses more assured of then that the snow is *white*, yet all the *Philosophers* were not of that opinion? Is this then sufficient reason on which to deny an *universal consent*, because some *Philosophers* opposed it, when it is most undoubtedly true which *Tully* sharply speaks of the ancient *Philosophers*, *Nihil tam absurdum quod non dixerit aliquis Philosophorum*; there was no absurdity so great, but it found a *Philosopher* to vouch it! But in this case those *Philosophers* who questioned the existence of a *Deity*, though they were not for number to be compared with those who asserted it, yet were not so *inexcusable* therein, as our modern *Atheists*; because they then knew no other way of *Religion*, but that which was joyned with horrible *superstition* and ridiculous rites of worship; they were *strangers* to any thing of *divine revelation*, or to any real miracles wrought to confirm it, and to such a way of serving God which is most agreeable to

*Metaphys.
lib. 2. c. 4.*

*De Nat.
Diet. 3.*

the *Divine nature*, most *suisable* to our *reason*, most *effectual* for *advancing* true *goodness* in the *world*. And although this most *excellent Religion*, viz. the *Christian*, be subject to many *scandals* by *reason* of the *corruptions* which have been mixed with it by those who have *professed* it, yet the *Religion* its self is *clear* and *untainted*, being with great *integrity* preserved in the *sacred records* of it. So that now *Atheism* hath far less to *plead* for its self, then it had in the *midst* of the *ignorance* and *superstition* of the *Heathen Idolatries*. But, if we should grant the *Atheist* more, then he can prove, that the *number* of such who *denied* a *Deity* hath been *great* in all *ages* of the *world*; is it *probable* they should speak the *sense* of *nature*, whose *opinion* if it were embraced, would *dissolve* all *tyes* and *obligations* whatsoever, would let the *world* loose to the highest *licentiousness* without *check* or *controul*, and would in time *overturn* all *civil Societies*? For, as *Tully* hath largely shewn, *Take away* the *being* and *providence* of *God* out of the *world*, and there follows nothing but *perturbation* and *confusion* in it; not only all *sanctity*, *piety* and *devotion* is *destroyed*, but all *faith*, *virtue*, and *humane Societies* too; which are impossible to be upheld without *Religion*, as not only *he*, but *Plato*, *Aristotle*, and *Plutarch* have fully demonstrated. Shall such persons then who hold an *opinion* so *contrary* to all other *dictates* of *nature*, rather *speak* the *sense* of *nature* then they who have asserted the *Belief* of a *Deity*, which tends so much to *advance nature*, to *regulate* the *world*, and to *reform* the *lives* of *men*? Certainly, if it were not a *dictate* of *nature* that there was a *God*, it is impossible to conceive the *world* should be so *constant* in the *belief* of him; when the *thoughts* of him breed so many *anxieties* in *mens minds*, and withall since *God* is neither *obvious* to *sense*, nor his *nature* *comprehensible* by *humane reasons*. Which is a stronger *evidence* it is a *character* of himself which *God* hath *imprinted* on the *minds* of *men*, which makes them so *unanimously* agree that *he is*, when they can neither *see* him, nor yet *fully comprehend* him. For any whole *Nation*, which have *consented* in the *denial* of a *Deity*, we have no *evidence* at all; some *suspicious* it is true there were at first concerning some very *barbarous* people in *America*, but it is since *evident* though

De Nat.
Deor. l. 1.
& De Legibus lib. 2.

though they are grossly mistaken as to the nature of God, yet they worship something in stead of him, such as the *Toupinambors*, *Caribes*, *Patagons*, *Tapia* and others; of the last of which *Vossius* from one *Christophorus Arcissewski* a *Polonian Gentleman* who was among them, hath given a large account of their Religion, and the manner of their worshipping of their gods, both good and bad. And that which among these *Indians* much confirms our present argument, is, that only those who have been the most barbarous and savage Nations, have been suspected of irreligion, but the more civilized they have been, the more evident their sense of Religion. The *Peruvians* worship one chief God, whom they call *Viracocha*, and *Pachacamak*, which is as much as the Creator of heaven and earth. And of the Religion of the *Mexicans*, *Lipsius* and others speak. So that the nearer any have approached to civility and knowledge, the more ready they have been to own a Deity, and none have had so little sense of it, as they who are almost degenerated to *Brutes*; and whether of these two now comes nearer to reason, let any one who hath is judge.

Addend.
lib. 1. De
Idol. p. 2.
V. Acoftam
lib. 9. c. 2.
Lips. Monit.
& exempts
Politic.

Another great evidence that God hath imprinted a character or Idea of himself on the minds of men is, because such things are contained in this Idea of God which do necessarily imply his existence. The main force of this argument lyes in this, That which we do clearly and distinctly perceive to belong to the nature and essence of a thing, may be with truth affirmed of the thing; not that it may be affirmed with truth to belong to the nature of the thing, for that were an empty Tautology, but it may be affirmed with truth of the thing its self; as it I clearly perceive upon exact enquiry, that to be an animal doth belong to the nature of man, I may with truth affirm that man is a living creature; if I find it demonstrably true that a Triangle hath three angles equal to two right ones, then I may truly affirm it of any Triangle; but now we assume, that upon the most exact search and enquiry, I clearly perceive that necessary existence doth immutably belong to the nature of God; therefore, I may with as much truth affirm that God exists, as that man is a living creature, or a Triangle hath three angles equal to two right ones. But because many are so apt to

§. 14.
2.

suspect some kind of *Sophism* in this argument, when it is managed from the *Idea* in mens minds, because that seems to imply only an *objective reality* in the mind, and that nothing can be thence inferred as to the *existence* of the thing whose *Idea* it is, I therefore shall endeavour to manifest more clearly the force of this argument, by proving severally the *suppositions* which it stands upon, which are these three. 1. *That clear and distinct perception of the mind is the greatest evidence we can have of the truth of any thing.* 2. *That we have this clear perception that necessary existence doth belong to the nature of God.* 3. *That if necessary existence doth belong to Gods nature, it unavoidably follows that he doth exist.* Nothing can be desired more plain or full to demonstrate the force of this argument, then by proving every one of these.

1. *That the greatest evidence we can have of the truth of a thing, is, a clear and distinct perception of it in our minds.* For otherwise the rational faculties of mans soul would be wholly *useless*, as being not fitted for any end at all, if upon a right use of them, men were still liable to be deceived. I grant the imperfection of our minds in this present state is very great, which makes us so obnoxious to error and mistake; but then that imperfection lies in the proneness in mans mind to be led by interest and prejudice in the judgement of things; but in such things as are purely speculative and rational, if the mind cannot be certain it is not deceived in them, it can have no certainty at all of any *Mathematical demonstrations*. Now we find in our own minds a clear and convincing evidence in some things, as soon as they are propounded to our understandings, as that a thing cannot be and not be at the same time; that, a non-entity can have no proper attributes; that, while I reason and discourse, I am; these are so clear, that no man doth suspect himself deceived at all in them. Besides, if we had no ground of certainty at all in our judging things, to what purpose is there an *Idea* of true and false in our minds, if it be impossible to know the one from the other? But I say not, that in all perceptions of the mind we have certain evidence of truth, but only in such as are clear and distinct; that is, when upon the greatest consideration of the nature of a thing, there appears no ground or reason at all

to doubt concerning it; and this must suppose the minds abstraction wholly from the senses; for we plainly find that while we attend to them, we may judge our selves very certain and yet be deceived, as those who have an *Isterism* in their eyes, may judge with much confidence that they see things as clearly and distinctly as any other doth. Besides, there are many things taken for granted by men, which have no evidence of reason at all in them; Now if men will judge of the truth of things by such principles, no wonder if they be deceived. But when we speak of clear and distinct perception, we suppose the mind to proceed upon evident principles of reason, or to have such notions of things, which as far as we can perceive by the light of reason, do agree with the natures of the things we apprehend; if in such things then there be no ground of certainty, it is as much as to say our Faculties are to no purpose; which highly reflects either upon God or nature. It is a noble question, as any is in Philosophy, What is the certain criterion of the truth of things, or what ground of certainty the mind hath to proceed upon, in its judgement of the truth of such objects as are represented to it? Nothing can render the Philosophy of *Epicurus* more justly suspected to any rational and inquisitive mind; then his making the senses the only certain conveyers of the truth of things to the mind. The senses I grant do not in themselves deceive any, but if I make the impressions of sense to be the only rule for the mind to judge by of the truth of things, I make way for the greatest impostures, and the most erring judgements. For if my mind affirms every thing to be in its proper nature according to that Idea which the imagination hath received from the impressions upon the Organs of sense, it will be impossible for me ever to understand the right natures of things. Because the natures of things may remain the same, when all those things in them which affect the Organs of sense may be altered; and because the various motion and configuration of the particles of matter may make such an impression upon the senses, which may cause an Idea in us of that in the things themselves, which yet may be only in the manner of sensation; As some Philosophers suppose it to be in heat and cold. Now if the mind judgeth of the nature of things according

to those *Idea's* which come from the *impressions* made upon the *Organs of sense*; how is it possible it should ever come to a right judgement of the *natures* of things? So that in reference even to the grossest *material beings*, it must be the perception only of the *mind* which can truly inform us of their proper *nature* and *essence*. Besides there are many *Idea's* of things in the *mind* of *man* which are capable to have properties demonstrated of them, which never owed their original to our *senses*, and were never imported to the *mind* at the *Keyes* of the *senses*. Such are most *Mathematical figures* which have their peculiar properties and demonstrations; such are all the *mutual respects* of things to each other, which may be as certain and evident to the *mind* as its self is; now it is plain by this, that all certainty of knowledge is not conveyed by the *senses*; but our truest way of certain understanding the nature of any thing, is by the clear and distinct perception of the *mind*, which is founded on the *Truth* of our *faculties*; and that however we may be deceived when we do not make a right use of our *reason*, because of the imperfection of our present state; yet if we say our *mind* may be deceived when things are evident and clear to them upon plain principles of *reason*, it is highly to reflect upon that *God* who gave men *rational faculties*, and made them capable of discerning *Truth* from *falsehood*.

2. That we have clear and distinct perception that necessity of existence doth belong to the nature of *God*. For which we are to consider the vast difference which there is in our notion of the nature of *God*, and of the nature of any other being. In all other beings, I grant we may abstract essence and existence from each other; now if I can make it appear, that there is evident reason, *ex parte rei*, why I cannot do it in the *mind* of *God*, then it will be more plain that necessity of existence doth immutably belong to his nature. It is manifest to our reason, that in all other beings which we apprehend the natures of, nothing else can be implied in the natures of them beyond bare possibility of existence; no, although the things which do apprehend, do really exist, because in forming an *Idea* of a thing, we abstract from every thing which is not implied in the very nature of the thing; now existence be-

ing only contingent and possible, as to any other being, it cannot be any ingredient of its *Idea*, because it doth not belong to its essence; for we may fully apprehend the nature of the thing, without attributing existence to it. But now in our conception of a Being absolutely perfect, bare possibility or contingency of existence speaks a direct repugnancy to the *Idea* of him; for how can we conceive that Being absolutely perfect, which may want that which gives life to all other perfections, which is existence? The only scruple, which mens minds are subject to in apprehending the force of this argument lies in this, Whether this necessary existence doth really belong to the nature of that being whose *Idea* it is, or else it be only a Mode of our conception in apprehending God? For clearing of this, we must consider by what certain rules we can know when the composition of things together in the understanding, doth depend upon the meer operation of the mind, and when they do belong to the things themselves and their immutable nature. For which we have no rule so certain and evident as this is, that in those things which depend meerly on the act of the mind joyning together, the understanding cannot only abstract one thing from another, but may really divide them in its conceptions from each other: but in such things which cannot be divided from each other, but the essence of the thing is quite altered, it is a certain evidence that those things were not conjoyned by the meer act of the mind, but do immutably belong to the natures of the things themselves. As for instance, when I conceive a *Triangle* inscribed in a *square*, a *man walking*, a *horse with wings*, it is evident I may understand the natures of all these things without these affections of them, because I can fully apprehend the nature of a *Triangle* without imagining a *square*, a *man* without walking, a *horse* without wings; and thence it necessarily follows, that the joyning of these things together was meerly an act of the mind; but now I cannot conceive a *Triangle* not to have three angles equal to two right ones, nor a *man* that hath not rationality belonging to him; for if I divide these attributes from them, I destroy their natures; and therefore the joyning of these together is not any meer act of the mind, but there are such things as are implied in the very notion of them, and:

and therefore immutably belongs to them. So now, when I conceive the notion of a *body*, I can imagine all *perfections* belonging to it, without conceiving it necessarily to exist; for it may be a *body* still, though it hath not its *being* from its *self*; but when I conceive a *Being absolutely perfect*, it is impossible to imagine it should have its *being* from any other; and if it be from its *self*, it must of necessity exist. For though the *mind* still be apt to doubt, whether *existence* in this *Idea* be only a *mode of cogitation*; yet that doubt may be easily removed, if the *mind* doth but attend to this, that at least *possibility of existence* doth belong to all those *Beings* which we have a clear *Idea* of, in our *minds*; and the reason why we attribute bare *possibility* to them, is because we apprehend some *reason* in our *minds* which keeps us from attributing *necessity of existence* to them, as that it is not implied in its *nature*, or that it doth depend on some other *being*, or that it wants *infinite power*. &c. Now all these *reasons* which make us attribute bare *possibility of existence* to any *being*, are taken away when we conceive a *being absolutely perfect*; for then *existence* is implied among the *number of perfections*, and this *being* is dependent upon all others, and infinitely powerful; so that nothing can hinder its *existence*; and therefore we must conclude that *necessity of existence* doth immutably belong to the *nature and notion of God*, and is not any *mode* only of our *conception*; because if we take away *necessity of existence* from *God*, we lose the notion of a *Being absolutely perfect*.

— The third thing, *that if necessary existence belongs to the nature of God, he doth exist*, not only follows as a necessary conclusion from the other two, as the premises, but is in itself evident to any ones *reason*; for it implies no less than a contradiction for a being to exist necessarily, and yet it be questionable, Whether he doth exist or no? Thus much I suppose may suffice here to explain and enforce this argument; if any are yet unsatisfied, I refer them to those judicious Authors, who have made it their peculiar business to manage it, and vindicate it from all objections: Which falls in only here as an evidence that *God* hath imprinted a character of himself on the minds of men, seeing we have so clear and distinct an *Idea*

Vid. Dis
Cartes Me-
aphys. Me-
ist. &
Resp. ad
Object.
D.H. More
Antidote
against
theism,
b. 1. ch. 8.
Append.
ch. 5, 6, 7.

of such a Being, from whom, if we take away necessity of existence, we destroy that notion which our minds have of an absolutely perfect Being. This is the first way whereby we can conceive an Infinite Being may make himself known to mankind, by imprinting an Indelible Character of himself upon the soul, which can be attributed to none besides himself, without doing manifest violence to our own faculties, and suspecting our selves deceived in things which are most clear and evident to us.

I come to the second evidence which God hath given us of his own existence, which is the mark and impression which he hath left of an Infinite Wisdom and Counsel in the appearances which are in Nature. There needs no great Criticism to find out the true Author of all the works of Nature; the works themselves shew the Author as plainly, as if his Effigies were drawn upon them. If the great curiosity and contrivance of any artificial Engine speak the excellency of the Mechanical wit of the framer of it; what ridiculous folly will it be to impute that rare mechanism of the works of Nature to the blind and fortuitous motion of some particles of matter? Suppose a multitude of letters casually thrown together, should fall so handsomely in order, that we might read in them the names of Troja, Juno, Aeneas, Dido, Turnus, Ascanius, or the like; is it possible for any to imagine that ever they should reach the grandeur, stile, matter and accuracy of the whole books of the *Aeneids*? So granting, that now matter being set in motion by a divine power, may by its continual agitation, at last produce some of the appearances of Nature; yet, what is this to the whole Universe, or the admirable contrivance of any one part in it? If these things had been the results of meer matter and motion, when once the particles of matter had been so united and settled together, as to produce any one species of animals in the world, (which it is almost unconceivable they should) yet we cannot think that if there had been but symmetry of parts enough for it merely to subsist its self, and propagate more, there could have been any further attempts made by those Atoms which had been once settled in a determinate figure. How came it then to pass that there is not any one species of animals in the world.

§. 15.

De Nat.
Deor. l. 2.
c. 95.

but what hath such an order, symmetry and contrivance of parts which speaks more then meer necessity of subsistence; and therefore speaks them to be the effects of a supream Governour of the world, and not the products of meer matter? Is it possible that any, who is not before-hand resolved to exclude a Deity, should imagine that any particles of matter should fall into the exact form, order, motion, and serviceableness to the world which the Heavenly bodies are in, without divine counsel and wisdom disposing of them? Tully tells us of a speech of Aristotle to this purpose; If we could suppose persons to have lived in some caverns of the earth; and to have enjoyed every thing there, of pleasure, and riches, or whatever it is which we think makes mens lives happy, and had never been abroad upon the surface of the earth, but had only had some obscure report of an Infinite Power and Being; and that afterwards these persons should by an opening of the caverns wherein they were, come abroad into these parts of the world, and should suddenly behold the Earth, Sea, and the Heavens, and observe the vastness of the clouds and violence of Winds, and behold the bigness, beauty, and influence of the Sun, and how the day depended upon his presence, and upon his withdrawing should view the face of the heavens again, (as it were the second course of Nature) the order, and ornament of the Stars, the varieties of the light of the Moon, their rising and setting, and their fixed, and immovable courses, they could not hold from believing there was a Deity, and that these were the effects of his power. So vastly different are the free and natural emanations of our souls, from that which we force and strain out of our selves, by distorting and wringing those free Principles of Reason which God hath given us. When a few sorry experiments and some arbitrary Hypotheses, must make us form other conceptions of things, then the majesty, order, and beauty of them do naturally suggest to us: We see, when once we can but abstract our minds from those prejudices which continual conversation with the world brings upon us, by that Speech of Aristotle, how readily our minds will frame an excellent Commentary upon those words of the royal Psalmist, The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Firmament shews his handy work. To which purpose likewise those words of the excel-

excellent Orator himself in another place, are very observable; *Quid est enim verius quam neminem esse oportere tam sulte arrogantem, ut in se mentem & rationem putet inesse, in celum undoque non putet? aut ea qua vix summâ ingenii ratione comprehendat, nulla ratione moveri putet? Quem verò astrorum ordines, quem dierum noctiumque vicissitudines, quem mensium temperatio, quemque ea qua gignuntur nobis ad fruendum, non gratum esse cogant, hunc hominem omnino numerare qui decet? What monstrous arrogance would it be in any man to think, there is a mind and reason in himself, and that there is none in the World? Or, to think those things are moved without reason and understanding, which all that he hath is scarce able to comprehend? Neither can he deserve the name of a man, from whom the observation of the courses of the stars, the succession and order of seasons, and the innumerable benefits which he enjoys in the World, does not extort gratitude towards that Being which ordered all these things. What a low opinion then had those more refined and generous Spirits, who went only upon principles of pure and undistorted reason, of those mean and ignoble souls which were inclined to Atheism; especially then, when Religion was so abused, that it was true of the wisest of them, what one said of Erasmus, *Magis habuit quid fugeres quam quid sequeretur*, they knew what to avoid, but not what they should embrace? And yet, when they saw so much into the folly and superstition of Heathen worship, they saw the greatest reason still to adhere to the belief of a Deity, as may be clearly seen, especially in the second of those excellent Dialogues of Tully, *de natura Deorum*. Where this particular argument to prove a Deity from the admirable contrivance of the works of Nature, is managed with a great deal of eloquence and reason, and by particular enumeration of most considerable parts of the Universe. So unbecoming a late Philosopher was that reason of his, why he waved the argument from the consideration of the World, to infer a Deity, because the ends of God are unsearchable, as flowing from his infinite Wisdom. For, what though God may conceal some things from men, which he intends, and are of no concernment for man to know, must therefore of necessity those ends of his be unsearchable in his works of Creation,*

which referr so immediately to the advantage of life, and tend so much to the veneration of the Deity?

§. 16.

Nay, the peculiar use and serviceableness of many parts of the Universe, especially of Animals, and chiefly of man, is so evident, that this hath been the main argument which hath induced some, otherwise Atheistical enough, to acknowledge and adore a Deity. And although the Epicureans be lamentably puzzled to give any tolerable account of many other appearances in Nature, yet they no-where discover so much weakness and ignorance, as when they come to discourse *De usu partium*, about the contrivance of the parts of mans body. Whose opinion is thus briefly delivered by Lucretius.

Lucret. l. 4.

*Nil ideo quoniam natum est, in corpore ut uti
Possemus; sed quod natum est, id procreat usum.*

i.e. that no parts of mans body were designed for that use which they are employed for, but the parts by chance fell into that form they are in, and men by degrees brought them to their present use and serviceableness. An opinion at first view so strangely unreasonable, that we cannot think Epicurus should have ever embraced it, had it not unavoidably followed upon his Hypothesis of all things in the Universe resulting only from a fortuitous concurrence of Atoms: According to which he supposed in Man a different configuration of parts would happen, from the various agitation and concretion of those little particles which at first run together in the fashion of a man; and because that man had in him a more florid and vivacious spirit, made up of the most subtile and moveable Atoms, thence motion came into the several parts, suitable to the different conformation of them. And, because those Atoms of which the soul is composed, are capable of sensation, thence it comes to passe, that it sees in the eye, hears in the ear, and smells in the nostrils. This is the most which is made of the opinion of Epicurus by the late sedulous vindicator of him, which yet himself calls *Intoleranda opinio*; and it will appear to be so, not only as contradicting what God himself hath delivered concerning man, but what reason it self will easily suggest.

suggest from the consideration of the several parts of man's body. It must be confessed there were some *Philosophers* elder then *Epicurus* who were much inclined to this opinion, as *Democritus*, *Empedocles*, *Anaxagoras* and others; yet, we find those who more narrowly searched into the natures of living creatures, were thereby brought to acknowledge a divine Providence which with a great deal of wisdom did order the several parts of animals, and adapted them to their peculiar uses. And although *Aristotle* his Books *de partibus animalium*, hath said enough to refute the fond opinion of those *Philosophers*; yet, none hath handled this argument with more exactness and accuracy, and with a more peculiar reflection on *Epicurus*, then *Galen* hath done in his excellent Piece *De usu partium*. Which *Gassendus* thinks *Galen* writ with a kind of *Enthusiasm* upon him, (*Eadeo totum opus videtur conscriptum enthusiasmo*) and to that all those seventeen books of his on that Subject, are a kind of 119 Psalm in Philosophy, or a perpetual Hymn upon the praise of the great Creator, or a just Commentary on those words of the Psalmist, Psalm 139. 14. *I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.* In the entrance of those books, *Galen* first shews the great variety of parts which is in several animals suitable to their several natures; the horse because of his swiftness and pride, hath the strongest Hoofs and most curled main; the Lion because of his fierceness and courage hath his strength lying in his teeth and paws; the Bull in his horns; the Boar in his tusks; the Hart and Hare being timorous creatures, their parts are made fittest for flight: but Man, because he hath a principle of reason in him, hath no defensive or offensive weapons in his body, but he hath hands to make use of both; which being joyned with and employed by his reason, far exceed all those advantages which any other creatures have; being employed not only to defend himself, but to build houses, make cloaths, arms, nets, whatever is usefull for himself, or hurtful to those creatures which he hath command over; but, because man was made for society and civil converse, therefore his hands were not only employed to defend himself or hurt other creatures, but for the mutual benefit and ad-

*Gassend.
T. 2. lib. 3.
sect. 3.*

vantage of mankind; for by these were *Laws written*, *Temples built*, all *Instruments of Art* framed; by them we enjoy the benefit of others wits, we can discourse with *Plato*, *Aristotle*, *Hippocrates*, and other *Ancients*, though at such a distance from us. Now, that the *configuration of parts* is not the cause of the use of them afterwards; as the *Lions paw* of his courage, the *Bulls horns* of his fierceness, or the *sleanderiness of the Hart* of its fearfulness, appears by this, because the young ones of the several kinds of animals, before their parts are grown up, strive to make the same use of them which the others do. As *Galen* saith, he had often seen a *Bull-calf* pushing with his head before any horns were grown out, and a *Colt* kicking when his hoofs were yet tender, and a young *Boar* defending himself with his jaws before he had any tusks; which is an evident argument that the parts were designed for the use, and not the use follow the parts. So, saith he, take three eggs, one of an *Eagle*, another of a *Duck*, and a third of a *Serpent*, and after they are hatched through a moderate heat, we shall find when they are but newly hatched, the two first will be striving to fly before they have wings, and the third endeavouring to creep away on its belly; and, if you breed them up to greater perfection, and bring them into the open ayr, you will presently see the young *Eagle* mounting into the ayr, the *Duck* quodding into a pool, and the *Serpent* creeping under ground. Afterwards, he comes particularly to handle the several parts of mans body, and first begins with the *Hand*, and shews in each part that it were impossible to have framed them with greater conveniency for their several uses then they have. The use of the hand is to take hold of any thing which man can use; now, there being things of such different sizes which men may use, it had been impossible for the hand, if it had been one entire thing and undivided, that it could have held things greater or lesser then its self, but it must have been equal to it. But now, as the fingers are plain and divided, they are equally fit for laying hold of objects of any size or quantity; For the least things, as a *Barley corn*, are taken up with the fore finger and the thumb; things somewhat bigger are taken up by the same, but not by the extremities of them as before; things somewhat bigger then these,

with

with the thumb, fore-finger, and middle-finger, and so on by degrees, till at last the whole hand is used; so, that the division of the hand into fingers is necessary. Neither were this enough, but the very position of the fingers as they are, is necessary too; for, they had been useless if they had been all divided into a right line; for, the firmest hold is either circular or at least in two opposite points; but now this is provided for, by the position of the thumb which may equally join with any of the fingers in taking hold of any thing. After this, he largely shews the particular necessity of the softness, roundness of the flesh, and nails on the tops of the fingers, and the special usefulness of these, and then comes to the bones of the fingers, how necessary they are for firm-hold; and if there had been but one bone in each finger, they would have served only for those things which we take up when they are extended; but now, seeing they have three several joints, they are fitted for all kinds of things; for, when we bow our fingers we use them as though they had no bones at all, and when we stretch them out, as though they were all but one entire bone; and the several inflections of the joints serve for all kind of figures: and then he shews the necessity of the flesh within the Fingers, and on either side of them, and upon them; and so with wonderfull accuracy handles the magnitude, number, figure of the bones, and nature of the joints of the fingers; and then the tendons and muscles belonging to the several fingers, which after he hath discoursed on through his first Book, he concludes it with the manifest inconveniency which would follow in the hand, were not every thing in it in that exact magnitude, position, and figure in which it is. With the same exactness he goes through all the parts of the body, handling in the second Book all that belongs to the arm, in the third the legs, in the fourth and fifth the Organs of Nutrition, in the sixth and seventh the lungs, in the eighth and ninth the Head, in the tenth the peculiar and admirable fabric of the eyes, in the eleventh the other parts of the face, in the twelfth the parts of the back, and so in the thirteenth, in the fourteenth and fifteenth the genitals, in the sixteenth the arteries, veins and nerves, and in the last the peculiar disposition and figure of all these parts, and the usefulness of the

Aristot. de
part. Anim.
l. 4.

the whole design : Which is as great as can be in any work whatsoever, which is for us to take notice of the admirable wisdom of God in contriving the several parts of the body of man : So that, that whole book contains in it a most full and pregnant demonstration of a Deity, which every man carries about with him in the structure of his body, on which account men need not go out of themselves to find proof of a Deity, whether they consider their minds or their bodies, of which it may be more truly said, than *Heraclitus* of old did of his *Stove*, *Etiam hic Dii sunt*. So that of all persons, I should most wonder at those whose employments particularly lead them to the understanding the parts and nature of mans body, if the proverb be not a great injury to them, since they have fuller insight into this demonstration of a Deity in the Fabrick of mans body, then many others who converse only with some jejune and sapless writings. And certainly, whatever is imagined to the contrary by men of weak understandings, the best way to cure the world of Atheism is true Philosophy, or a search into the nature of things; which the more deep and profound it is, the more impossible will it be found to explicate all the Phenomena of Nature by meer Matter and Motion. It was wisely observed of a great person and Philosopher, that a narrow and slight inspection into Nature, inclined men of weak heads to Atheism; but a more through insight into the causes of things, made them more evidently see the necessary dependance of things on the great and wise Creator of them. A little knowledge of Philosophy is apt to make mens heads dizzy, and then in danger of falling into the gulf of Atheism; but a more careful and diligent view of it, brings them into sobriety and their right wits again. Such a slight inspection had the followers of *Epicurus* into the nature of things; for, when they found how in the present state of the World, the various motion and configuration of the particles of matter would handsomely save many appearances of Nature, they drunk with the success, reel presently into an Infinite Space, and there imagine they behold infinite worlds made of the concretion of Atoms, and ever since their eyes have been so dusted with these little Atoms, that they could see nothing else in the World but them. Which, how gross and unreason-

able it is, will appear from our present *subject*; for who but *Lactetius* or *Epicurus* could ever think that our *nestrils* were at first fashioned as they are *mierly* by the violent impulse of the air within, which would force its self a passage out? But how came the air into the body before it was forced out? did it first break open the *lips*, make all that round cavity in the *month*, for a passage through the *aspera arteria*? but if when it was in, it would come out again, was not the *month* wide enough to let it go? or did the first *man* *stint* his *month* on purpose to find another *vant* for the air? if so, how chance the force of the air did not carry away the *epiglottis*? or if it got safely up to the *nose*, how came it not to force a passage out about the *eyes* rather then to go down so low first? But if we believe these rare contrivers of *mans* body, all the inward vessels of the body were made by the course of water, as channels are; but how is it possible, to imagine that the *Oesophagus* and the *stomack* should be so curiously contrived by the meer force of water? and that all the *Intestines* should be made only as channels to let it out again when it was once in? but how comes then such a kind of *reciprocation* and *Peristaltick* motion in those vessels? how come the several coats of them to be so firm? if it had been only a forced passage, it would have been direct and through the substance of the parts, as we find it to be in all forced passages in the body of the earth. Besides, if the water received into the *stomack* forced the passage through the *guts*, how comes it not to run in the channel it had made for its self? or did it not like that passage when other things came into it, and therefore found out a more secret one into the *bladder*? but if that were made by the water, how came it to be so full of *membranes*, and so subject to *dilatation*? Thus ridiculous will men make themselves, rather then shew themselves men in owning and adoring that infinitely wise and powerful God, who orders all things in the world according to the counsel of his Will. What can be more plain and evident then the peculiar usefulness of the several parts of *mans* body is? What other man can be imagined that *man* is formed with a *month*, but only for taking in of *nourishment*, and for receiving and letting forth of air? or that an *infant* is so ready to open his

mouth, but that there are *breasts* and *milk* for him to suck in order to his nourishment? Why should the *Oesophagus* be so hollow and the *stomack* so wide, but that one was provided for the better conveyance of the meat down, and the other for the fermentation of it? whence come all the other vessels to be so conveniently placed, were it not for the distribution of nourishment into the several parts, or for conveying away the excrements of it? Can any one think that the several *muscles* and *tendons* should be placed in the more solid parts for any other end then for the better motion of them? or that the *nerves* should be derived from the *brain* into the several parts of the body for any other design then to be the instruments of sense and motion? or that the continual motion of the *heart* should be for any other purpose, then for receiving and distribution of the blood through the *arteries* into the parts of the body? or that the *eye* with all its curious fabrick should be only accidentally employed in seeing? These things are so plain, that however the *Epicureans* may more easily lose themselves and deceive others in explaining the appearances of nature in some inanimate beings, yet when they come with their blind concurrence of *Atoms* to give an account of the parts of animals, they miserably beset themselves and expose themselves only to contempt and pitty. It were easie to multiply examples in this kind, but I shall only mention one thing more, which is, if all the parts of mans body have no higher original then the concurrence of *Atoms* in the first man and woman, by what were the *umbilical vessels* formed, whereby the *Child* in the womb receives its nourishment? by what *Atoms* was the passage of the *succus nutritivus* framed from the mother to the child? how come those vessels to close up so naturally upon the birth of the child, and it to seek its nourishment in quite another way? Will the particles of matter which by their concretion formed the first pair, solve this too? Thus still we see how impossible it is (to go no further then our selves) to give any tolerable account of things without an infinite power and Being which produced all these things, and hath left so plain an inscription of himself upon the works of nature, that none but those who shut their eyes can abstain from seeing it.

I come now to the third evidence of a *Deity*, which is, *that there are some beings in the world which cannot depend upon matter or motion, i. e. that there are some spiritual and immaterial substances or Beings* (for if the thing be acknowledged, it is unbecoming a man to contend about words) the consequence of this for the proving a *Deity*, neither hath been nor I suppose will be denied by such who question an *Infinite Being*, the same principles leading to the denying and the proof of both, and *immaterial Beings* being the strongest proof that there is something above matter in the world. If there be then such things in the world which matter and motion cannot be the causes of, then there are certainly *spiritual and immaterial Beings*, and that I shall make appear both as to the minds of men, and to some extraordinary effects which are produced in the world.

1. I begin with the *nature of the soul of man*. And herein I must confine my self to those arguments which directly prove my present purpose, and on that account must quit all those common arguments to prove the *souls immortality* from the attributes of God; for all these do suppose the existence of a *Deity* as already evident; neither can I rely with safety on the way which some have taken to prove the immortality of the soul meerly from the phenomena of sensation, which they endeavour to prove cannot be performed by meer matter and motion; for granting all this, yet the utmost that can be proved by it is no greater immortality in our souls than in the souls of Brutes; and in the sense in which that is admitted, I suppose an Epicurean will not deny the soul of man to be immortal as *Demonax* in *Lucian* said, when he was asked whether the soul were immortal or no, it is (said he) but as all things else are; for those who make the soul to be nothing but some more subtil and active particles of matter, do not think that upon death they are annihilated, but that only they are dispersed and dissipated, or, in the Platonists phrase, may return to the soul of the world. These ways I cannot think to be sufficient probations of such a spiritual and immaterial Being in man which we now enquire for, much less can I make use of so precarious and infirm an hypothesis as *præexistence*, which makes men apt to suspect

the cogency of such reasons which tend to prove the immortality of the soul, which are linked with a supposition, not only inevident either to sense or reason, but likewise needlesse and impertinent. For I know no one argument which doth directly prove the immateriality of the soul that doth in the least infer any necessity of praesistence, but on the same accounts it will prove the souls eternity. Being therefore thus at liberty to enquire into the nature of the soul considered in her self, our only way must be to finde out such peculiar properties in the soul of man, which cannot be salved on supposition there were nothing else but matter and motion in the world. Supposing then that all sensation in man doth arise from corporeal motion which is so strongly asserted by the modern Philosophers, and that the highest conceptions which depend on sense can amount no higher then imagination, which is evident; if it can then be proved that there is a principle of action in man which proceeds in a different way of operation then sensation does, and that there are such operations of the soul which are not imaginations, it will be then clear that there is a principle in man higher then matter and motion. Now although it be a task sufficiently difficult to explain the manner of sensation its self in a meer mechanical way, supposing no higher principle then meer matter, yet it will appear far more difficult, nay impossible without a spiritual or immaterial Being to salve such appearances in man which transcend the power of imagination; which will appear by these following operations of the mind which every one who hath it, may find within himself.

I. *Correcting the errors of imagination.* For if all our perceptions were nothing else but the images of corporeal things left in the brain, the judgement of the mind must of necessity be according to the impressions which are made upon the organs of sense. But now if our minds can and do form apprehensions of things quite different from those which are conveyed by sense, there must be a higher principle of knowledge in man then imagination is. For which the common instance of the just magnitude of the Sun is very plain; If we judge according to the image which is conveyed to the brain by our eyes, we can never imagine the Sun to be bigger then
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by seems to us to be; nay though the *figh* be advantaged by the help of *Telescopes*, it cannot receive such an *image* or *Idea* of the *Sun* which answers to its just *magnitude*, viz. that it is 160 times bigger then the *earth*. From whence now comes this apprehension of the *bigness* of the *Sun* above that proportion which can possibly come in at our *senses*? If it be said, that by the observation of the lessening of objects according to the proportion of distance, the mind may come to understand how much bigger the *Sun* may be then he seems, I grant it; but withall enquire how the imagination comes to have proportions and distances which are meer respects, and can have no corporeal phantasms whereby to be represented to it; so that by this very way of ratiocination it is evident, that there is some principle in man beyond imagination. Again, when the mind by ratiocination hath proceeded thus far and findes the *Sun* to be so great, what *Idea* is there of this *magnitude* in the mind? the mind cannot fix its self on any thing but it must have an *Idea* of it; from whence comes this *Idea*? not from corporeal phantasms, for none of them could ever convey the due *magnitude* of the *Sun* to the mind, and therefore the forming of this *Idea* must be a pure act of Intellection which corrects the errors of imagination, and is a principle above it. So in the *figh* of a stick, when under water, the representation of it by the sense to imagination is as crooked, for corporeal motion carries things to the eye without any judgement upon them; the eye conveys the image to the brain, and according to the rules of corporeal perception must presently take every thing for true which is conveyed thither; now from what principle is it that this error of our senses is corrected? So in many other things wherein our imaginations are quite puzzled, and when we go according to them, it is impossible to apprehend things as our reason tells us they are; thus as to the *Antipodes*, our imaginations are wholly of the mind of the ancients, that the *Antipodes* to us must needs be in danger of knocking their heads against the *Stars*, and if they go upon any thing, it must be their heads, and that that part of the *Heavens* which is in the other *Hemisphere* is below us; these are pertinacious errors of imagination while we adhere to that, and are only corrigible by our reason which makes

it evident to be otherwise. Besides, there are many things our reason and understanding inform us that they may be, and yet our imaginations can form no Idea of them; let an Epicurean Philosopher try the power of his imagination in his Inane or Infinite empty space, and he will soon finde, that as strong as his Phancy is, it will soon tire and retreat as not being able to converse through so unimaginable a Space. So for eternal duration our reason tells us the thing is possible, but when our imaginations begin to fardle up some conceptions of it, they are presently tying both ends together; which will make a strange Idea of eternity; the case is the same in the Infinite divisibility of quantity, which Epicurus was somewhat aware of when he denied the thing. But how many Mathematical Problems are there which will jade our imaginations presently, and yet our reason stands still and assures us of the possibility of the things, as in two lines coming nearer still to each other, and yet never meeting, and in many other things, which most clearly evidence that there is a higher faculty in man which exceeds matter and motion, when it is able thus to correct the faults and to supply the defects of imagination.

- §. 18. 2. Reflex acts of the mind upon its self argue a higher principle than imagination. That there are such things are evident to any one who hath any use of cogitation; and if any one doubt of it, his very doubting argues he hath reflex acts; for he could not doubt whether he had or no, but by reflection upon himself. Now that reflex acts should be caused through matter and motion, or through meer imagination, is uncomceivable. For we see no matter can act upon its self; indeed one part of extended matter may act upon another, but not purely upon its self; the extremities of the fingers can never feel themselves, though they may touch each other; neither can imagination reflect on its self; for that proceeding upon corporeal images, must have such a representation from the senses of what it acts upon; now what image of its self can be conveyed to the imagination through the external organs of sense? The eye may see through the motion of the objects of sight pressing upon it; but how can it see that it sees? so the imagination receives the images conveyed to the brain; but what

what Shop hath it to make new ones in of its self, and so be guilty of the greatest Idolatry of worshipping its own Image? But though the imagination cannot thus reflect, yet we finde such a principle within us that is very apt to retire into its self, and recollect things which could never have been conserved so long in that Shop of shadows the imagination. For if imagination be nothing else but, as a modern Philosopher defines it, *conception remaining, and a little and little decaying* Hobbs Hu- from and after the act of sense, like the motion of water after a man. nature stone is thrown into it, how is it possible that at so great a ch. 3. sect. 1. distance of years, as we commonly finde, the image of a thing may be retrieved with as much facility and freshness as to circumstances, as if it were but new done? and that account which he gives of remembrance is very weak and insufficient when he tells us, that remembrance is nothing else but the *Self. 7.* missing of parts, which every man expecteth should succeed after they have a conception of the whole. For, according to this, it is impossible for the mind to retrieve any object without mutilation of it; and so there cannot possibly be a recollecting of all circumstances, when an object is once passed, and the motion begins to decay. But all this while, we understand nothing by what means this decaying motion should continue so long as our memory can fetch things back, or by what means an object, when once passed, can be recovered again if memory be nothing else but decaying motion. Such perplexities must needs arise, when men will undertake to solve the inward operations of the soul by meer motion; but is it not evident that many times when the mind is employed about other things, some phantasms of things long ago past will come and present themselves to the mind, with as much clearness as if new done? whereas if memory were decaying motion, the longer past, the more impossible would it be to recover any thing; but, do we not find that many old men will better remember the circumstances of many things they did in their Childhood then a year or two before? Besides we see what quickness and vivacity there is in our intellectual faculties above corporeal motion, with what facility the mind turns it self from one object to another, how suddenly it rangeth the whole world, how it trips over mountains, crosseth the ocean,

mounts to the skies and at last quarries upon its self, and all in the twinkling of an Intellectual eye? As quick as the eye of the body is, the mind far exceeds it, and can withdraw the imagination from attending the organs of sense; thus do men who have their minds much fixed, fix their eyes too; and yet afterwards can scarce tell themselves what they have looked on all that while. Sometimes the mind sits and compares phantasms together, and sports its self in sorting them into several ranks and orders, and making matches between such things which are sure to have no affinity with each other, which are thence called *entia rationis* or the creatures of the mind. And can all these and many other such operations which men are conscious to themselves of, be nothing else but the motion of some *flegmatick matter*, the reaction of the brain, and the meer effects of imagination?

3. The profound speculations of the mind argue a power far above imagination and corporeal motion. I wonder how Epicurus his soul, when, if we believe him, it was made up of Atoms, could ever imagine an Infinite Vacuity? Could meer Atoms ever dispute whether they were Atoms or no? For I doubt not but Epicurus was tain to argue much against himself, before he could perswade himself to so stupendious a piece of folly? Were there nothing in man but meer corporeal motion, whence came the dispute, whether the soul were corporeal or no? Can Atoms frame Syllogisms in mood and figure? and meer matter argue *pro* and *con*, whether it be matter or something else? What kind of aerial particles were their souls compounded of, who first fancied themselves to be immaterial? What strange agitations of matter were those which first made men think of an eternal state? which thoughts have ever since so stuck upon these little spherical bodies, that they could never yet disburden themselves of them: Whence come such amazing fears, such dreadful apprehensions, such sinking thoughts of their future condition in minds that would tain ease themselves by believing that death would put a period both to soul and body? whence on the other side come such encouraging hopes, such confident expectations, such comfortable proporessions of their future state in the souls of good men, when their bodies are nearest

nearest to the grave? *Seneca*, who was somewhat dubious sometimes as to the future condition of the soul, yet could tell his dear *Lucilius* with what pleasure he could think of it; and could elsewhere say of the soul, *Et hoc habet argumentum divinitatis sua, quod illum divina delectant, nec ut alienis interest sed ut suis*: the soul had that mark of Divinity in it, that it was most pleased with Divine speculations, and conversed with them as with matters which nearly concerned it. And when it hath once viewed the dimensions of the heavens, contemnit domicilii prioris angustias, it was ashamed of the cottage it dwelt in; nay, were it not for these speculations, non fuerat opera pretium nasci, it had not been worth while for the soul to have been in the body; and, as he goes on, detraxe hoc inestimabile bonum, non est vita tanti, ut scdem, ut astnem. Could there be now so great an *Epicurism* in contemplation, were the soul of man of *Epicurus* his mould, a meer complexion of Atoms? Would dull and heavy matter ever have delighted to have searched so much into the causes of things, to have gone over the world in its speculations, and found more sweetness in knowledge, than the little *Epicure* the *Bee* tastes in his choicest flowers? *Epicurus* his own *Philosophy* is a demonstration against himself; if his soul had not been of a purer nature than he fancied, he would never have made his study of *Philosophy* a part of his *Epicurism*? Had his soul been such Atoms, as he fancied, when his brain had been well heated at his study, those more vivid and spirituous particles, like the spirits of Wine had been in danger of evaporation, and leaving the more lumpish matter to compleat his work. Of all persons, I most admire that *Philosophers* who make so much use of their understandings, should so ungratefully requite them, and serve them like old horses, when they have made them do all the service they could, turn them into the highways and let them dye in a ditch. But yet all *Philosophers* have not been so unthankful; some have understood the worth of their souls and asserted it, if they have not used too high, i. e. *Platonical* expressions of it, making it a particle not of matter, but of the Divine Nature its self, a little *Driz* in a Cottage, that staves here a while and returns

to that upper region from whence it came. As *Manilius* speaks.

Manil. l. 4.

*An dubium est habitare Deum sub pectore nostro,
In cælumque redire animas, cælumque venire ?*

And while the *soul* is here in its cage, it is continually fluttering up and down, and delighting to look out now at this part, and then at another, to take a view by degrees of the whole *Universe* ; as the same *Poet* goes on.

*Quid mirum noscere mundum
Si possunt homines, quibus est & mundus in ipsis ;
Exemplumque Dei quisque est in imagine parva ?*

The *soul* hath nothing more delightful to it then *Knowledge*, and no knowledge so pleasing and satisfactory as of him whose image and superscription it bears, who makes himself most known to such as enquire after him ;

*Seque ipsum inculcat & offert.
Ut bene cognosci possit.*

I conclude this with that of *Seneca* in that excellent Preface to his natural Questions ; *O quam contempta res est homo, nisi supra humana se erexerit !* What a pitiful thing is *Man*, were it not that his *soul* was apt to soar above these earthly things ? And by this aptness to soar so high above these *terrene* objects, and to converse with so much freedom with *spiritual* Beings, as well as abstracted notions, we may certainly infer, that our *rational* souls are of a far more noble and refined Nature, then that more feculent principle of *Imagination* which alwayes converses in *face Romuli*, and can go no further then our senses carry it. And thus I have made good the first proof, that there is something above *Matter* and *Motion* in the world, which is from that immaterial Being which is in *Man*.

§. 19. The next evidence which we have of a Being above matter and

and motion, is from the extraordinary effects which have been in Nature. I speak not now meerly of such things which by their natures and effects are manifested to proceed from some Beings which bear ill-will to mankind, multitudes of which are related by men Philosophical and inquisitive, with such enumerations of circumstances, and particular evidences, that they are not meer *Impositions*, that one may on the same grounds question any matter of fact which himself did not see, as such relations which are delivered by persons without interest or design, and such as were able to judge of the truth of circumstances; such are both ancient and modern Philosophers, Physicians, Statesmen, and others. Neither shall I insist on such Prodigies which oft-times presage revolutions in States, if we believe Machiavel himself, who, in a whole Chapter designedly proves it; and professeth himself utterly to seek for the causes of them, unlesse they may be attributed to some *Spirits* and *Intelligences* in the air which give the World notice of such things to come. But, those things which I suppose have the most clear and undoubted evidence of true and undoubted miracles, (the matters of fact being affirmed by eye-witnesses who sealed the truth of them with their lives) are those recorded in the Holy Scriptures: which there are only two ways to evade, either by questioning the truth of the things, which I suppose in the precedent book we have proved with as much rational evidence as any thing of that nature is capable of; or else, that the things therein recorded might be saved without a Deity. For which only two ways have been excogitated by Atheistical Spirits; either attributing them to the power and influence of the Stars, the foundations of which fond and absurd opinion have been taken away by those many Writers, who have rationally confuted the whole art of judicial Astrology; or else, that they are done by the meer power of Imagination, which is the way of Avicenna and some other Arabick Writers; which is so wilde an effect of the power of Imagination, that nothing doth so much demonstrate the irregular motions of it, as such an opinion doth; and is sufficiently derided and refuted by Pomponatius himself.

Disput. l. r.
cap. 56.

V. D. H.
Mores My-
stery of
Godl. l. 7.
ch. 14, 15,
16, 17:

Now then it being an acknowledged principle in *Nature*, that every thing continues in the course it is in, till something more powerfull put it out, if then such things have been in the World, which have been real alterations of the course of *Nature*, as the *Suns* standing still in the time of *Joshua*, then there must be something above matter and motion, and consequently that there is a God.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Origine of the Universe.

The necessity of the belief of the Creation of the world in order to the truth of Religion. Of the several Hypotheses of the Philosophers who contradict Moses: with a particular examination of them. The ancient tradition of the World consonant to Moses: proved from the Ionick Philosophy of Thales, and the Italic of Pythagoras. The Pythagorick Cabala, rather Egyptian than Mosaick. Of the fluid matter which was the material principle of the Universe. Of the Hypotheses of the eternity of the World asserted by Ocellus Lucanus, and Aristotle. The weakness of the foundations on which that Opinion is built. Of the manner of forming principles of Philosophy. The possibility of creation proved. No arguing from the present state of the World against its beginning, shewed from Maimonides. The Platonists arguments from the goodness of God for the eternity of the World, answered. Of the Stoical Hypothesis of the eternity of Matter; whether reconcilable with the text of Moses. Of the opinion of Plato and Pythagoras concerning the preexistence of matter to the formation of the World. The contradiction of the eternity of matter to the nature and attributes of God. Of the Atomical Hypothesis of the Origine of the Universe. The World could not be produced by a casual concurrence of Atoms, proved from the nature and motion of Epicurus his Atoms, and the Phenomena of the Universe, especially the production and nature of Animals. Of the Cartesian Hypothesis, that it cannot save the Origine of the Universe without a Deity giving motion to matter.

THE foundations of Religion being thus established in §. 1.
the being of God and the immortality of the soul, we
now come to erect our superstructure upon them, by asserting
the undoubted truth and certainty of that account of the
world.

world which is given us in the writings of *Moses*. Which beginning with the world its self, leads us to a particular consideration of the *Origine* of the *Universe*, the right understanding of which hath very great influence upon our belief of all that follows in the *Word of God*. For, although we should assert with *Epicurus* the *Being* of a *Deity*, if yet with him we add that the world was made by a casual concurrence of *Atoms*, all that part of *Religion* which lies in obedience to the *Will of God* is unavoidably destroyed. All that is left, is only a kind of *Veneration* of a *Being* more excellent than our own, which reacheth not to the government of mens lives, and so will have no force at all upon the generality of the World, who are only allured by hopes, or awed by fears, to that which of their choice they would be glad to be freed from. Besides, what expressions of gratitude can be left to *God* for his goodness, if he interpose not in the affairs of the world? What dependance can there be on divine goodness, if it be not at all manifested in the World? What apprehensions can we have of *Gods* infinite Wisdom and Power, if neither of them are discernable in the *Being* of the world? And, as the opinion of *Epicurus* destroys *Religion*, so doth that of *Aristotle* which attributes eternity to the *Universe*, and a necessary emanation of it from the first cause, as light comes from the *Sun*; for if so, as *Mamonides* well observes, the whole *Religion* of *Moses* is overthrown, all his miracles are but *Impostures*, all the hopes which are grounded on the Promises of *God*, are vain and fruitless. For, if the world did of necessity exist, then *God* is no free agent; and if so, then all instituted *Religion* is to no purpose; nor can there be any expectation of reward, or fear of punishment from him who hath nothing else to do in the world, but to set the great wheel of the *Heavens* going. So much is it our concernment to enquire into the true *Original* of the world, and on what evidence of reason those opinions are built, which are so contrary to that account given of it in the very entrance of the *Books* of *Moses*. Wherein we read the true *Origin* of the world to have been by a production of it by the omnipotent *Will* and *Word* of *God*. This being then the plain assertion of *Moses*, we come to compare it in point of reason, with all those several *Hypotheses*.

More Ne.
vosh. P. 2.
cap. 25.]

theses which are repugnant to it, which have been embraced in several ages by the Philosophers of greatest esteem in the World. Which may be reduced to these four: 1. Such as suppose the world to have existed as it is from all eternity. 2. Such as attribute the formation of the world as it is to God; but will assert the preexistence and eternity of Matter. 3. Such as deny any eternity to the World, but assert the Origine of it to have been by a casual concurrence of Atoms. 4. Such as endeavour to explain the Origine of the Universe and all appearances of Nature, merely by the mechanical Laws of the motion of Matter.

I begin with those who asserted the eternity of the world as it is among whom Aristotle hath born the greatest name, who seems to have arrogated this opinion to himself; for, when he enquires into the Judgment of the Philosophers, who had writ before them, he says of them *ἡρώδης οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνάγκη* *Aristot. de*
Ἰκταν, all the Philosophers asserted that the World was made, *Caelo l. 1.*
 though some one way, some another. And, were this true *cap. 10.*
 which Aristotle saith, it would be the strongest prejudice against his opinion; for, if the World had been eternal, how should it come to pass, that the eldest Philosophers should so readily and unanimously embrace that opinion which asserted the production of the world? Was it not a strong presumption of the Novity of the Universe, that all Nations to whom the Philosophers resorted, had memorials left among them of the first Origine of things? And from hence it is observable, that when the humour of Philosophizing began to take the Greeks (about the XL. Olympiad when we may suppose Thales to flourish) the beginning of the world was no matter of dispute, but taking that for granted, the enquiry was, out of what material principle the Universe was formed; of which Thales thus delivers his opinion in Tully; *Aquam De Nat.*
dixit esse initium rerum, Deum autem eam mentem qua ex Deor. l. 1.
aqua cuncta fingeret; wherein, he plainly distinguisheth the *cap. 25.*
 efficient from the material cause of the World. The prime efficient was God, the material principle water. It is a matter of some enquiry, whether the first principles of Philosophy among the Greeks, were not rather some traditional things conveyed to them from others, then any certain Theories which

which they had formed for their own experiments and observations. The former is to me far the more probable on many accounts, but chiefly on this, that the first principles of the two founders of the chief sects of *Philosophers*, viz. the *Ionick* and *Italic*, (for all the other were but the various issues of these two) did come so near to that which we have the greatest reason to believe to have been the most certain accounts of the *Origin* of the *World*. For this opinion of *Thales* seems to have been part of that *universal tradition* which was continued in the *World* concerning the first principles of things : For, I do not see any reason to averr with so much confidence, as some do, that those *Philosophers* who spake any thing consonantly to *Moses*, must presently converse with the *Jews*, transcribe their opinions out of the *Scriptures*, or have it conveyed to them in some secret *Cabala* of the *Creation*, as it is affirmed of *Pythagoras* and *Plato*, and may be with no less reason of *Thales*. But, this I suppose may be made evident to any considerative person, that those *Philosophers* of *Greece* who conversed most abroad in the world, did speak far more agreeably to the true accounts of things, than such who only endeavoured by their own wits to improve or correct those principles which were delivered by the other *Philosophers*. Which I impute not so much to their converse with the *Mosaick writings*, as to that *universal tradition* of the first ages of the world, which was preserved far better among the *Phœnicians*, *Egyptians*, *Chaldeans*, and others than among the *Greeks*. For which we have this evident reason, that *Greece* was far more barbarous and rude in its elder times than those other Nations were, which had means of preserving some *Monuments* and general reports of the first ages of the world when the *Greeks* wanted them. And therefore, we find that *Greece* from its beginning shined with a borrowed light ; and saw not by an extromission of rays of knowledge from its self, but by an intromission of those representations of things which were received from other Nations. Those who formed *Greece* first into civil societies, and licked it into the shape of well-ordered *Common-wealths*, were such who had been traders for knowledge into *Forraign* parts. To which purpose

pose Diodorus Siculus informs us that Lycurgus and Solon, as well as the Poets, Orpheus, Musæus, Melampus, and Homer and the Philosophers afterwards, Pythagoras, Plato and others, had gained most of their knowledge and wisdom out of Ægypt; nay, he saith in general ἄσσοι καὶ παρ' ἑλλήσι διδοῦσά μιν ἐν σὺ-
 νήσῃ καὶ παιδείᾳ, παρέβαλον εἰς Ἀγυπτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἀρχαῖς χρόνις, ἵνα καὶ ἐν ταύτῃ νομῶν καὶ αἰδέας μαθήσων. All those who were re-
 nowned among the Greeks for wisdom and learning, did in an-
 cient time resort to Ægypt, to be acquainted with their Laws and knowledge. On this account therefore we are not to seek for the ancient and genuine tradition of the world from the native and home-bred Greeks, such as Aristotle and Epicurus, but from those who took the pains themselves to search into those records which were preserved among the elder and more knowing Nations; And although the Nations they resorted to, sought to advance their own reputation in the histories of their ancient times, of which we have already given a large account, yet they were more faithful in the account which they gave of the Origine of the whole Universe. For it appears from Diogenes Laertius that the Egyptians did constantly believe, that the world had a be-
 ginning, and was corruptible; that it was spherical, and the Stars were of the nature of fire; that the soul was of an im-
 mortal nature, and did pass up and down the world. Which Laertius cites from Hecataeus and Aristagoras. So that we need not make Pythagoras acquainted with such a Cabbala of the Creation, which in all probability neither the Jews nor he ever dreamt of; we find a fair account may be given of most of the opinions of Pythagoras, and whence he derived them, without forcing the words of Moses into such a sense, which the plainness and perspicuity of the writings of Moses argue them not capable to admit of. But I will not deny from those concurrent testimonies of Hermippus and Aristobulus, besides Origen, Porphyrie, Clemens Alexandrinus, and others, that Pythagoras might have had opportunity of conversing with the Jews, (which it is most probable was in Chaldea after the Captivity, at which time Pythagoras was there among them) but, that Pythagoras should converse with the successors of Elisha on mount Carmel, as Vossius

Biblioth. l. 1
V. Euseb.
Præp.
Evangel. l. 10

Diog. Laertius
proem. p. 7.

V. Selden
de iure nat.
& gent.
apud Ebraeos
os. l. 1. c. 2.

Voss. de
Sethis Phi-
losoph. c. 6.
sect. 5.

thinks, or that *Moschus* the *Sidonian* Philosopher in *Jamblichus* should be *Moses*, as others fancy, or that *præexistence* of souls should be part of the *Mosaick Cabbala*, or that the *Pythagorick* numbers, as they are explained by *Nicomachus Gerasenus* in *Plotinus*, should be adequate to the *dayes* of the *Creation Cabbalistically* understood, are fancies too extravagant and *Pythagorean* to be easily embraced. If *Pythagoras* was circumcised, it was more for *Love* of the *Egyptians* than the *Jews*, among whom he spent his twenty two years: if *præexistence* of souls be a rational hypothesis, we may thank the *Egyptians* for it, and not *Moses*: if numbers be so expressive of the work of *Creation*, we are beholding to the *Arithmetical Hieroglyphicks* of *Egypt* for them. But al-

V. Maubem.
Hieroglyph.
Kircheri.
To. 3. Oedip.
c. Egypt.

though *Pythagoras* might not be acquainted with such a *Philosophick Cabbala* of the *Creation*, which none of the *Jews* as far as we can find understood, till one more versed in *Plato* and *Pythagoras* then in the learning of his own Nation, viz. *Philo* of *Alexandria*, began first to exercise his wit on the Text of *Moses* with *Platonick notions*; yet I shall easily grant that *Pythagoras* by means of his great industry and converse with the learned Nations, might attain to far greater knowledge of many mysterious things in *natural Philosophy*, and as to the *Origine* of the *Universe*, than any of the *Homebred Philosophers* of *Greece*, or it may be then any one of the Nations he resorted to, because he had the advantage of comparing the several accounts of them together, and extracting out that which he judged the best of them. And hence *Plutarch* tells us, that the first principles of the world according to *Pythagoras*, were these two: the one was

Plutarch.
de plac.
Philos. l. 1.
cap. 3.

ἡ ἀκίνητος αἰτία καὶ ἀσώματος (ἡμῶν ἐστὶν ὁ θεός) an active and forming principle, and that was *God* whom he called *Mind* (as *Anaxagoras* likewise did); the other was ἡ παθητικὴ καὶ αἰσθητὴ (ἡμῶν ἐστὶν ὁ κόσμος καὶ τὰ ὄντα) passive and material, which is, the visible world.

§. 3.

And thus we see these two renowned founders of *Ionick* and *Italic* societies of Philosophers, both giving their concurrent Testimony with *Moses* as to the true *Origine* of the world, and not at all differing from each other; for thus

V. Thales.

Thales speaks in *Diogenes Laertius*, ἀποβύτου ἦν ὁ κόσμος, δὲ καὶ ἡ φύσις

ὁμοιωτὸς τῷ θεῷ. καὶ οὐκ ἐκ γένεως, God is the eldest Be-
 ing, because unbegotten, the world the most beautiful, because
 it is God's workmanship. To which those expressions of Plato
 in his *Timæus* come very near (whose Philosophy was for
 substance the same with the Pythagorean) when he had be-
 fore ascribed the production of the world to the goodness of
 God, which goodness of his did incline him to make all other
 things like himself. *Θεὸς ὅτι ἡ ἐξ αὐτοῦ τῷ ἀρίστῳ δεῖν ἄλλο πλεον τὸ
 καλλίστον.* For the most excellent Being cannot but produce the
 most excellent effects. And as to the material principle out
 of which the world was made, there appears no great
 difference between the ὕδωρ of *Thales*, and the ὕλη of *Plato*
 and *Pythagoras*; For *Plato*, when he tells us what a kind of
 thing the material principle was, he describes it thus, ὅχ ἡσυχίας
 ἀγαν, ἀλλὰ κινούμενον ἀκαταστάτως καὶ ἀτάκτως, which *Chalcid.*
Chalcidius renders it, *motum impotissimo fluctuans neque unquam*
quiescens; it was a visible corporeal thing (πᾶν ὄντι ἢ ἀετὸν) *Timæus.*
 which was never at rest, but in continual disorderly motion and
 agitation: which is a full explication, I suppose, of what
Thales meant by his water, which is the same with that ἰαυὲ
 or mixture of mud and water together, which others speak
 of as the principle of the Universe; as *Orpheus* in *Athenago-*
ras, and the *Scholias*t on *Apollonius* cited by *Grosius* and *la Verit.*
 others. Which we have the more reason to believe, because *Christ. Reli.*
 the successors of *Thales*, *Anaximander* and *Anaxagoras*, ex-
 press themselves to that purpose: *Anaximander* called the
 Sea τὴν ἀρχαίαν ὕδατος λείανον, the remainder of the Primitive
 moisture: and *Anaxagoras* says, before the Νῦς, or God set
 things in their order, πάντα χυρῆματα ἢ ὁμοῦ προσημύα, all things
 were at first confused together: which must needs make that
 which *Chalcidius* tells us *Numenius* attributes to *Pythagoras*,
 which his Translator calls *Sylvam fluidam*, or fluid matter. *Chalcid. in*
 Which is the same likewise with the *Phœnicians* Μᾶτ, which *Tim. p. 394.*
 as appears by *Eusebius*, some call ἰαύ, others ὕδατος μίξις
 ὁμίον, some mud, or slime, others the putrefaction of watery *Euseb.*
 mixtures, which they say was ἀποθνήσκουσα καὶ γίνουσα ἰαύ, the Prop.
 Seed-plot of the Creation and Generation of things. Thus we *Evang. l. 16.*
 see how *Thales* with the *Phœnicians* from whom he was de-
 rived, as *Laertius* tells us and *Pythagoras*, with the *Egyp-*

Gen. I. 2.

sians and others concur with *Moses*, not only in the production of the world, but in the manner of it, wherein is expressed a fluid matter which was the material principle out of which the world was formed, when we are told that the earth was without form and void, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, i. e. that all at first was but fluid matter; for *P. Fagius* from *R. Rimchi* renders *רוח* by *van*, which fluid matter was agitated and moved by the Divine Spirit, or the *vis plastica mundi*, so *Chrysostom* calls it *ἐργετα* ζωντα; and so *Drusius* and *P. Fagius* explain *רוח* by motion or agitation. And herein we have likewise the consent of those fore-named excellent Philosophers, who attribute the Origine of particular things in the world to this agitation or motion of the fluid matter. For *Chalcidius* speaking not only of *Thales*, *Pythagoras*, *Plato*, but of *Anaximenes*, *Heraclitus*, and others, says thus of them, omnes igitur hi — in motu positam rerum originem censuerunt: they all agreed in this, that the Origine of things was to be ascribed to the motion of the parts of matter. So the *Phanicians* called this motion of the particles of matter *αἶσα* ζοῦδου καὶ πνεύματιδου, a dark and blustering wind. And how suitable this explication of the Origine of things from the motion of fluid matter is to the history of nature, appears by those many experiments by which mixed bodies are shewed to spring from no other material principle then the particles of fluid matter. Of which you may read a discourse of that ingenious and learned Gentleman *Mr. Boyle* in his *Sceptical Chymist*. Only thus much may here suffice to have made it appear, that all those Philosophers who were most inquisitive after the ancient and genuine tradition of the world concerning the first beginning of things, did not only concur with *Moses* in the main thing, that its beginning was from God, but in the particular circumstances of it, as to the fluid matter and the motion thereof. Concerning which I may yet add, if it be material, the Testimony of *Homer* in *Plutarch*,

Alia. 5:

Οὐρανός, ἑσπερος γένεσις ἀνθρώπων πύμας.

Odys. 6.
Chalcid.
p. 378.

And in *Chalcidius*: Inque eadem sententia *Homerus* esse invenitur, cum *Oceanum* & *Thetidem* dicat parentes esse gentium; cumque

conque iurjurandum Deorum constituat aquam, quam quidem *V. Meus. in*
 esse appellat Stygem, antiquitati tribuens reverentiam, & iure *Chal p. 37.*
 iurando nihil constituens reverentius. To which purpose like-
 wise Aristotle speaks in his *Metaphysics*, that the reason *Metaphys.*
 why Styx was made the oath of the Gods, was because water *l. 1. c. 3.*
 was supposed to be the material principle of Things, which he
 saith was ἀρχὴ τῆς αὐτῆς καὶ παλαιὰ περὶ τὸν οὐρανὸν δόξα, a most an-
 cient tradition concerning the Origine of the Universe. And
 tells us before, that some were of opinion τὰς παλαιὰς καὶ
 μακρὰς τῆς οὐρ ἡρώων καὶ σοφῶν θεολογούντων, that the most
 ancient and remote persons and first writers of Theology, held
 this opinion of Water being the first material principle of
 things.

Having thus made it appear what a consent there was be-
 tween the ancient tradition of the world, and the writings of
 Moses concerning the Origine of the world; I now come to
 consider upon what pretence of reason this tradition came to
 be contradicted, and the eternity of the world asserted. For
 which we are to consider that the difference of the former
 Philosophers of the Ionick sect, after the time of Thales, as to
 the material principle of the world, one substituting ayr; ano-
 ther fire instead of water, rendred the tradition its self
 suspected among other Philosophers, especially when the
 humour of innovating in Philosophy was got among them,
 and they thought they did nothing unless they contradicted
 their Masters; thence came that multiplicity of Sects pre-
 sently among them, and that Philosophy which at first went
 much on the original tradition of the world; was turned into
 disputes and altercations, which helped as much to the finding
 out of Truth, as the fighting of two Cocks on a dunghil doth
 the finding out the Jewel that lyes there. For which, scrap-
 ing and searching into the natures of things had been far
 more proper then contentions and wranglings with each other;
 but by means of this litigious humour, Philosophy from being
 a design grew to be a meer Art, and he was accounted the best
 Philosopher, not that searched further into the bowels of
 nature, but that dressed and tricked up the notions he had in
 the best posture of defence against all who came to oppose
 him. From hence those opinions were most plausible, not

§. 4.

which were most *true*, but which were most *defensible*, and which like *Des Cartes* his *second element*, had all the *Angles* cut off, on wh ch their *adversaries* might have had advantage of *justling* upon them, and then their *opinions* were accounted most *pure* when they were so *spherical*, as to pals up and down without *interruption*. From such a *degeneracy* of *Philosophy* as this we have now mentioned, arose the *opinion* of the *eternity* of the *world*; For the certain *tradition* of the *world* being now *lost* in a *crowd* of *Philosophers*, whose main *aym* was to *set up* for themselves, and not to *trade* with the *common bank*, so that there could be no *certain* and *convictive evidence* given to a *sanffling Philosopher* that *things* were ever otherwise than they are, they found it most *defensible* to *assert* that the *world* never had a *beginning*, nor would have an *end*, but *alwayes did* and would *continue* in the *State* they were in. This *opinion*, though *Aristotle* seems to make all before him to be of another mind, yet was *hatched* as far as we can find at first, under *Pythagoras* his *successors* by *Ocellus Lucanus*, as appears by his *book* still extant *magis tunc vñ nunc quoniam* of the *nature* of the *Universe*; to whom *Aristotle* hath not been a little beholding, as *Ludov. Nogarola* hath in part manifested in his *notes* on *Ocellum*, although *Aristotle* had not the *ingenuity* of *Pliny*, *agnoscere per quos profeceris*. From *Aristotle* this *opinion*, together with his name, spread its self much further, and became the *opinion* most in *vogue* among the *Heathen Philosophers*, especially after the *rile* of *Christianity*; for then not only the *Peripateticks*, but the *modern Platonists*, *Plotinus*, *Apuleius*, *Taurus*, *Jamblichus*, *Alcinous*, *Proclus* and others, were all engaged in the *defence* of the *eternity* of the *world*, thinking thereby the *better* to overthrow *Christianity*. Hence came the *hot* and *eager contests* between *Proclus*, *Simplicius*, and *Philoponus*, who undertook to answer *Proclus* his *eighteen arguments* for the *eternity* of the *world*, and to charge *Aristotle* with *self-contradiction* in reference to it. But nothing were they more troubled about, then to reconcile the *Timæus* of *Plato* with the *eternity* of the *world*, which they made to be a meer *Hypothesis* and a kind of *Diagramme* to *salve providence* withall; although the plain words of *Plato*

not only there but elsewhere do express, as far as we can judge by his way of Writing, his real judgement to have been for the production of the world by God. For which purpose we have this observable Testimony in his *Sophista*, where he divides all manner of productions of things into divine and human, and opposes the opinion that conceived all things to be produced by an eternal power, to the opinion of the vulgar which, saith he, was ὅτιν' αὐτὸ φύσιν ἀπὸ τῆς αἰτίας αὐτομάτης, ἢ ἀπὸ διατίαι· φύσιν; that all things were produced by a blind force of nature without any reason or counsel, to which he opposeth the other opinion, that they are made μετὰ λόγου καὶ σοφίας Deus ἀπὸ θεῶ μετ' οὐρανοῦ, by a divine power with infinite reason and wisdom; and when *Theætetus* expresseth himself in an *Academical* way as to either of these opinions, the *hospes Eleatenfis* who therewith takes the part of the Philosopher, tells him, if he thought he were inclinable to the other opinion, ὡς ἂν τῷ λόγῳ μὲν πῶς ἀναγκαῖα ἐπαρκεῖται ποιεῖν ὁ λόγος. He would undertake to make him confess the contrary by the evidence of reason which he would bring. And we shall see what great reason there is for this opinion, when we consider what weak and infirm foundations the contrary is built upon. For all the arguments which either *Ocellus*, or *Aristotle*, or the modern *Platonists* make use of, are built on these following suppositions, which are all false. 1. That it is unconceivable that things should ever have been in any other state then they are. 2. That there is no other way of production but by Generation. 3. That God is no free agent, but produced the world by necessity of Nature.

1. That it is unconceivable that things should ever have been any otherwise than they are. The reason of which supposition was this, that the general conclusions of reason which they proceed upon in Philosophy, were taken up from the observation of things as they are at present in the World. Which is evident from the ground of Aristotle's condemning the opinion of Empedocles, who asserted the production of the world, and yet the incorruptibility of it, τὸ ὅτι ἐς αὐτοὺς αὐτὸ αἰῶνα δὲ ἴσως ἢ πάντα, ἣ δ' αὖτα τὰν, which he accounts impossible. Arist. de and gives this as his reason, μὴ αὖ τὸ ὅτι γενέσθαι δὲ ἀλγεῖν, ὅσα ὅτι αἰὼν 1. τὸ αὐτὸ ἢ πάντως ἐπὶ αὐτῷ ἀνελκόμενα. For, saith he, nothing else cap: 10. can

can be rationally asserted, but what we find to be in all things, or at least in most; now because there could nothing be found in the world which was produced (i. e. by generation) and yet was incorruptible, therefore he concludes it impossible it should be so with the Universe. By which we evidently see what the grand principles of reason among the Philosophers were: viz. such observations as they had made from the present course of nature in the order of the Universe. From hence arose that strong presumption among them, which hath been so taken for granted, that it hath been looked on as a common notion of humane nature, viz. *ex nihilo nihil fit*, which was the main argument used by them to prove the eternity of the world: and by others to prove the præexistence of matter. So Ocellus argues against both the dissolution and production of the world from this principle, if the world be dissolved, saith he, it must either be *ἢ ἐκ τοῦ οὐδενος*, either in that which is, or in that which is not; it cannot be dissolved into that which is, because then the Universe cannot be destroyed; for that which is, is either the Universe or a part of it: neither can it be dissolved into that which is not, *ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν ὅθεν ἔσται*, *ἐκ τοῦ οὐδενος*, *ἢ ἐκ τοῦ ὅτι ἐστιν*. For it is impossible that a thing should be made out of that which is not, or be dissolved into nothing. And Aristotle somewhere tells us, that it is a principle which all the writers of natural Philosophy are agreed in (*ὅτι οὐδὲν οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ οὐδενος τίς ἔστιν ἀναρτίς διὰ τοῦ τοῦ οὐδενος*) which is, *ἐκ τοῦ οὐδενος τίς ἔστιν ἀναρτίς*, that it is impossible for any thing to come out of nothing. But now when we observe upon what grounds this Principle was took up by these Philosophers, we have no reason to admit of it as an Universal standard of nature. For we finde by these Naturalists who thus asserted this principle, that when they go about to prove it, it is only from the course of Generations in the world, or from the works of art, both which suppose matter præexistent, and from these short collections they form this universal *Maxime*. And from hence when they discoursed of the manner whereby God did produce the World, their imaginations ran presently upon that which the Epicurean in Tully enquires after, *qua materia? qua ferra? qua vestes? qua machina? qui vis?*

De Nat.
l. 1.
De Mo-
crati.

Ocellus Lu-
cians p. 46.
ed. Commel.

Physic. l. 4.

De Nat.
l. 1.

instanti operis fuerunt? they apprehend God only as an artificer that contrives the world first into a platform, and then useth Instruments to erect it, and consequently still suppose the matter ready for him to work upon. So true is that of *Balbus* in *Tully*, when he comes to discourse of the nature of God; *In quo nihil est difficilius quam à consuetudine sensuum aciem mentis abducere*; nothing is more difficult then to abstract our minds from the observations of this visible world when we seek to apprehend the nature of the Deity. Thus we see upon what general grounds the Philosophers proceeded, and from what they took them, and how insufficient any collections from the present order of the Universe are to determine any thing concerning its production by. For supposing a production of the world, several things must of necessity be supposed in it, different from what the present order of the world is; and it is an unreasonable thing to argue from a thing when it is in its greatest perfection, to what must always have been in the same thing for by this means we must condemn many things for falsities which are apparently true, and believe many others to be true which are apparently false. For which *Maimonides* useth an excellent Similitude; Suppose, saith he, one of exquisite natural parts, whose mother dies as soon as he is born, and his Father brings him up in an Island, where he may have no society with mankind till he be grown up to years of understanding, and that he never saw any female of either man or beast: Suppose now this person to enquire of the first man he speaks with, how men are born, and how they come into the world. The other tells him, that every man is bred in the womb of one of the same kind with our selves, thus and thus formed; and that while we are in the womb we have a very little body, and there move, and are nourished, and we grow up by little and little till we come to such a bignesse, and then we come forth into the world, and yet grow still till we come to such a proportion as we are of. Here presently this young man stops him and enquires, when we were thus little in the womb and did live, move, and grow, did we not eat and drink, and breathe at our mouth and nostrils as we do now? did we not ease Nature as now we do? If it be answered him, No; then he presently is ready to deny it; and offers to bring demonstrations

παντα οσα ειναι τω κοινω. τα δε συμμιγνυσθαι της μεταβολης ταυτης ομο-
 πας) ομοει, & διαλυνται. Every thing that comes into being and is
 subject to dissolution, hath two observable mutations in it; the
 one is whereby it grows from lesse to greater, and from worse to
 better, and this is called Generation, and the height of this mu-
 tation perfection; the other begins from better to worse, and
 from bigger to lesse, and the conclusion of this is, corruption and
 dissolution. But now, saith he, if the world had a beginning,
 there would be such a mutation in it, and it would have grown
 by degrees greater till it had come to its perfection, and from
 thence it would sensibly decay till it came to dissolution; but no
 body hath ever observed such a mutation in the world, neither is
 there any appearance of it; αλλ' αει καταλυντο & συνιεναι δια-
 νη & τον & ομοιον αυτω εαυτω; but the world is semper idem,
 it varies not, nor alters any thing from its self. For which,
 he particularly instanceth in the courses, Symmetries, figures,
 positions, intervals, proportions of motion which are in the
 World, which things are all capable of such a mutation, yet
 we see no such thing in the Universe; from whence he infers
 that the Universe was alwayes, and will be as it is. Upon the
 same principle doth Aristotle dispute for the eternity of the
 world from the nature of his *materia prima*, because if the
 first matter were generated, it must be generated of other
 matter and so in infinitum; and so he argues from the na-
 ture of the Heavens, that they are not capable of generation
 and corruption as other bodies are. All which arguments
 signifie no more then this, that the world was not generated
 as Plants or Animals are; and who ever right in his wits
 asserted that it was! But do any of these arguments prove
 it impossible, that God having infinite power should produce
 the Universe after another way then any of those things are
 produced in, which we observe in the world? For we assert
 an infinite and eternal Being which was the efficient cause of
 the world, who by his omnipotent power produced it out of
 nothing, and continues it in its Being; which is well ex-
 pressed by the Author of the refutation of Aristotle in Justin
 Martyrs works. We assert, saith he, one God who is eternal
 himself, that hath nothing else Coeval with himself, neither by
 way of subjection or opposition; whose power is so great that no-
 thing

thing can hinder it, by which power he produced the world
 ἡ γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν ἄλλο τὸ πρὸς τὸν θεόν, ἢ τὸ αὐτοῦ θέλημα, τὸ αὐτὸ
 θεῖον, which hath no other cause, either of its beginning,
 or of its being, or continuance, but only his Will. Who truly
 answers in a Philosophical manner, the particular Allegari-
 ons out of Aristotle, concerning the eternity of the world: his
 design being, as he saith, to shew μὴ κατὰ τὴν ἀποδείξιν
 ὁμοιότητα, ἀλλ' ἡν ἐπαγγέλλεται Ἐκκλῆσιαν τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ ἀλλοίωσιν τῶν
 λόγων ποιῆσαι, τὰ τοιαῦτα, ἀλλ' ἐκασμὸν τὸ δοκεῖν διόρισαν.
 That the Greek Philosophers in their discourses concerning God
 and the Creation, were very far from being as good as their
 word, to observe the Laws of demonstration; but instead of them
 preceded only upon opinions and conjectures. And as to this
 particular of the possibility of another way of production,
 besides that of Generation, he proves it from Aristotles own
 opinion, from the equal necessity of the existence of matter,
 as of God. For, saith he, if God can produce anything out
 of matter, which is as necessarily existent as himself, he may
 produce something out of nothing. For, the same repugnancy
 that there is in that which is absolutely nothing to be produced,
 the same must there be in that which is necessarily existent.
 How then can God produce something out of matter, which
 necessarily exists, and not be able to produce something out of
 nothing? For, if matter have its original from its self, how
 can it be subject to the power of another? And besides, if we
 acknowledge God to have his being from himself, and on
 that account attribute infinite power to him, by the same
 reason we must attribute it to matter. But whatever hath in-
 finite power in its self, hath a power upon something beyond
 its self; but if God and matter have it both, they can never
 have power upon each other, or without themselves. Which
 is a far greater absurdity then the meer asserting a power to
 produce something out of nothing, which is implied in the
 very notion of infinite power; for if it be confined to any
 matter, the power is not infinite, because we cannot but
 conceive the bounds of it; for it extends no further then
 matter doth. So that a power of creation is implied in the
 very notion of a Deity; and therefore it is a meer Sophism
 to argue, because the world could not be generated, therefore

Justin
 Martyr:

ep. p. 123.

it could not be produced; unless any other way of production but by generation, be proved impossible.

A third false Hypothesis they proceeded on, was this, *That the Being of the world was no effect of Gods will, but of the necessity of nature.* For although the Philosophers we now speak of, did assert a *Deity*, which in some sense might be called the cause of the world, yet they withal asserted that the world was *Coeval* with God himself; and so though there might be some priority in order of causes between them, yet there was none in order of time, or duration, as we see the light, though it flows from the Sun, yet the Sun is never without light. This *Aristotle* proves from the necessity of motion and time: For, saith he, *what ever is moved, must be moved by something else, and consequently there must be a running in Infinitum*; but this runs on a false supposition of the necessity of a continual *Physical motion* in things, which we deny, since God by his infinite power may give motion to that which had it not before; and so all that can be proved, is the necessity of some first cause which we assert, but no necessity at all of his continual acting, since he may cause motion when he please. And for *Time* continually existing, it denotes nothing real in its self existing, but only our manner of conception of the duration of things, as it is conceived to belong to motion; and so can argue nothing as to the real existence of things from all eternity. But the later *Platonists* look upon these as insufficient ways of probation, and therefore argue from those attributes of God, which they conceive most necessary and agreeable to Gods nature; and by which the world was produced if at all: so that by the same arguments whereby we prove that the world was made by God, they prove it to have been from all eternity. It was well and truly said of *Plato* in his *Timæus*, that the goodnesse of God was the cause of the production of the world; from which Speech the more modern *Platonists* gather a necessity of the worlds eternity: For from hence they infer, that since God was alwayes good, he must alwayes have an object to exercise his goodnesse upon; as the Sun disperse his light as soon as he is himself. True, were God of the nature of the Sun, it would be so with him; or were the Sun of

Sect. 7.

3.

the nature of God, it would not be so with it. But there is this vast difference between them, that though God be essentially and necessarily good, yet the communications of this goodnesse are the effect of his Will, and not meerly of his nature; For were not the acts of beneficence and goodnesse in God the free acts of his will, man must be made as happy as he was capable of being, not only upon his first existence in the world, but as long as it should continue, by meer necessity of nature without any intervention of the will or actions of men. And so there could be no such difference as that of good and bad men in the world; For if the bestowings forth of Gods goodnesse to the world be so necessary, all men must become necessarily good, if Gods goodnesse be so great as to be able to make men so, which I suppose will not be questioned. By this then we see that the communications of Gods goodnesse to the world are free, and depend upon the eternal counsels of his will, which is a depth too great for us to approach, or look into; by what necessity then, if God be a free Agent, and of Infinite wisdom, as well as goodnesse, must we either assert the eternity of the world, or fear to deprive God of his essential goodnesse? Whereas to make the communications of Gods goodnesse ad extra necessary, and therefore to make the world from eternity, that he might have an object to exercise his goodness on, is to take as much off from the Infinite perfection and self-sufficiency of the Divine nature, as it would seem to flatter his goodnesse. For God cannot be himself without his goodnesse; and it his goodnesse cannot be without some creature to shew or display it upon, God cannot be perfect nor happy without his creatures, because these are necessary issues of his goodnesse; and consequently we make the Being of the creatures necessary to his being God. Which is the highest derogation from the absolute perfection of the Divine nature. We assert then so much goodnesse in God, as none can be imagined greater; we assert, that it was the communication of this Divine goodnesse which gave being to the world, but withall, we acknowledge God to be an Agent infinitely wise and free, who dispenseth this goodnesse of his in such a way and manner as is best pleasing to himself, though ever agreeable to his Nature. As God is

infinitely good in himself, so whatever he doth is *suisable* to this nature of his; but the particular determinations of the acts of Gods beneficence belong to the *Will* of God, as he is a most free and *Independent Agent*; so that goodnesse as it imports the necessary rectitude of the *Divine Nature*, implies a perfection inseparable from the true *Idea* of God; but as it is taken for the expressions of *Divine bounty* to somewhat without, as the object of it, it is not implied in our conception of God, as to his Nature, but belongs to the free determinations of his Will. We cannot then, neither ought we to determine any thing concerning the particular ways of Gods bounty towards the whole *universe*, or any part of it, any further then God himself hath declared it to us. Now we see the world exists, we have cause to adore that goodnesse of God, which not only gave a *Being* to the *Universe*, but continually upholds it, and plentifully provides for all the *Creatures* which he hath made in it. Which the *Heathen* was to sensible of, that the *Stoick* in *Tully* taking notice of the abundant provision which is made in the world, not only for mans necessity, but for delight and ornament, cries out, *ut interdum Prona nostra Epicurea esse videatur*: Gods providence doth abundantly exceed mans necessity. We see then from this discourse, how unsafe and unsatisfactory (that I may not say bold and presumptuous) those arguments are, which are drawn from a general consideration of the *Divine nature and goodnesse*, without regard had to the determinations of his Will, as to the existence of things in the World. It cannot certainly then be an argument of any great force with any candid Enquirers after Truth and Reason, which hath been lately pleaded in the behalf of that *Pythagorean hypothesis* of the *præexistence* of souls, viz. That if it be good for mens souls to be at all, the sooner they are, the better; but we are most certain that the *Wisdom and Goodnesse* of God will do that which is best; and therefore if they can enjoy themselves before they come into these terrestrial bodies (it being better for them to enjoy themselves then not) they must be before they come into these bodies. Wherefore the *præexistence* of souls is a necessary result of the *Wisdom and Goodnesse* of God, who can no more fail to do that which is best; then he can to understand

derstand it. I now seriously enquire of such who love reason above Plato and Pythagoras, whether if the eternity of the world were put into the argument instead of the *Præexistence* of souls, this argument would not hold as strongly for that, as it doth for *Præexistence*; and if I am bound to believe *Præexistence* on this ground, I be not likewise bound to believe at least the souls of men eternal, if not the Universe. But how reconcilable the eternity of the world is to the Pythagorick Cabbala of the Creation, I am yet to understand. But if this Argument doth not at all infer the eternity of the world, as we have shewed it doth not, much less doth it *præexistence* of souls.

Volkelius;
de vera
rel. h. 2. c. 4.

We have thus far considered the first Hypothesis, which is repugnant to Moses concerning the Origin of the Universe, which is that which asserts the eternity of the world as it is; we come now to the second, which attributes the Formation of the world as it is, to God as the efficient cause, but attributes eternity to the matter out of which the World was framed. I am not ignorant that some who would be taken for the Masters of Reason, are so far from conceiving this Hypothesis to be repugnant to the text of Moses, that they conceive it to be the genuine sense of it, viz. that there was a *præexistent matter*, out of which God formed the World. But I would willingly understand how Moses would have expressed that matter its self was created, supposing it had been his intention to have spoken it; for although the word כֶּרֶן may not of its self imply necessarily the production of things out of nothing, i. e. out of no *præexistent matter*, yet it is acknowledged by all that no word used by the Jews is more proper to that than כֶּרֶן is; and P. Fagius cites it from R. Nachmani, that the Hebrew Language hath no other word to signify such a production out of nothing, but כֶּרֶן. It is therefore a very weak manner of arguing, that because כֶּרֶן is sometimes used for no more than עֲשֵׂה, therefore the world was created out of *præexistent matter*; all that can rationally be infer'd, is, that from the meer force and importance of that word, the contrary cannot be collected: but if other places of Scripture compared, and the evidence of Reason, do make it clear that there could be

be no preexistent matter which was uncreated, then it will necessarily follow that Creation must be taken in its proper sense. And in this sense it is evident, that not onely *Jews* and *Christians*, but even the *Heathens* themselves understood *Moses*, as is plain by *Galen*, where he compares the opinion of *Moses* with that of *Epicurus*, and ingeniously confesseth that of *Moses*, which attributed the production of things to GOD, to be far more rational and probable then that of *Epicurus* which assigned the *Origine* of things to a meet casual concurrence of *Atoms*: But withall adds, that he must dissent from both; and sides with *Moses* as to the *Origine* of such things as depend on Generation, but asserts the preexistence of matter, and withall that Gods Power could not extend its self beyond the Capacity of the matter which it wrought upon. *Atque id est*, saith he, in quo ratio nostra ac *Platonis*, cum aliorum qui apud *Græcos* de rerum natura recte conscripserunt, à *Mose* dissidet. How true these words are, will appear afterwards. *Chalcidius* in his Commentaries on *Plato's Timæus*, where he speaks of the *Origine* of *Man*, which in him is still translated *sylva*, and enquires into the different opinions of all *Philosophers* about it, takes it for granted that, according to *Moses*, this *Man* had his production from God. *Hebrai sylvam generatam esse consensunt; quo-* *rum sapientissimus Moyses non humana facundia, sed divina,* *ut ferunt, inspiratione vegetatus, in eo libro, qui de genitura mundi censetur, ab exordio sic est profatus, juxta interpretationem LXX. prudentium, Initio Deus fecit Cælum & Terram. Terra autem erat invisibilis & incompta. Ut* *verò ait Aquila: Caput rerum condidit Deus Cælum & Terram; Terra porro inanis erat & nihil; vel ut Symmachus; Ab exordio condidit Deus Cælum & Terram. Terra porro fuit otiosum quid, confusumque, & inordinatum. Sed Origenes asseverat, ita sibi ab Hebrais esse persuasum, quod in aliquantulum sit à vera proprietate derivata interpretatio. Fuisse enim in exemplari. Terra autem stupida quadam erat admiratione. Omnia tamen hæc in unum aiunt concurrere, ut & generata sit ea quæ subiecta est universo corpori sylva, sermonesque ipsos sic interpretantur. Where we finde by the Testimony of *Chalcidius* an universal Consent as to the production of the*

universal corporeal matter by God; for that is all which is understood by his term of *generata est*. But this same Author afterwards tells us, that by *Heavens and Earth* in the first verse of *Genesis* we are not to understand the visible *Heavens and Earth*: For, saith he, *the Heavens which are called the Firmament, were created after, and on the third day when the waters were separated, the dry Land appeared, which was called Earth.* *Qui tumultuario contenti sunt intellectu, Cælum hoc quod videmus, & Terram qua subvehimur, dici putant; porro qui alius indignant, negant, hoc Cælum ab initio factum, sed secundo die.* And therefore by the *Heavens* he understands incorporeal nature, and by *Earth* *van* or the primigenial matter. And this, saith he, appears by the following words, *The Earth was invisible, and without form*, i. e. this corporeal matter, before it was brought into order by the power and wisdom of God, remained a rude and indigested lump; and that which is so, might well be called invisible, and without form. And therefore it is called *inani* and *nihil*, because of its capacity of receiving all forms, and having none of its own. *Symmachus* calls it *otiosa & indigesta*; the former because of its inability to produce any thing of its self: the latter because it wanted a *Divine Power* to bring it into due order. That stupidity and admiration which *Origen* attributes to it, he conceives to relate to the Majesty of God, who was the Orderer and Contriver of it, *siquidem opificis & auctoris sui Majestate capta stuperes.* Thus we see that according to *Moses*, the first matter of the world was produced by God, which is largely manifested by *Origen* against the *Marcionists*, a fragment of which is extant in his *Philocalia*; and by *Tertullian* against *Hermogenes*, and others, who from the opinion of the *præexistence* of matter are called *Materiaris*.

§. 9.

Having thus cleared, the sense of *Moses*, it is far more difficult to find out the true Opinions of the ancient *Philosophers* concerning the production or eternity of corporeal matter, there having been so great dissensions, not only about the thing it self, but about the opinions of some about it. For it is plain by *Plutarch's* *Λυξογωγία*, as well as the discourses of the later *Platonists*, how eager some have been

Origen.
Philoc. cap.
24. Tertul.
ad. Her-
mag. pertot.

De Anima
procreat. 2
Tomii.

been to interpret *Plato's Timaeus* in favour of the Eternity at least of matter, if not of the world. But although *Plato* doth assert therein a *præexistence* of rude matter before the formation of the World; yet I see no reason why he should be otherwise understood then in the same sense that we believe a *Chaos* to have gone before the bringing the world into the order it is now in. And in that sense may those places in *Plutarch* be interpreted, ὅς ἐστιν τὸ αὐτὸ ὄντι ἢ γένεσις. αὐτὸ ἐν τῷ μὴ ἔχοντι καὶ ἰσχυρὸς ἔχοντι, and so likewise those following words, ὅς ὁδοὺς ἔτι πρὶν τὸ ἀσώματον. ἔτι ἴσχυρὸς τὸ ἀσώματον ἰσχυρὸς for the meaning may be no more then that *Plato* conceived that all the productions of the kinds of things which are in the world, was out of a *Præexistent Hyle*; the one *Spiritual and intelligible*, out of which he supposed souls to be formed, the other *sensible and corporeal*, out of which other *Beings* which were more gross and material, were produced. So *Chalcidius* tells us, that both *Pythagoras* and *Plato* looked upon *constitutionem sylvæ* to be *opus providentiæ*: which I suppose relates not onely to the bringing of matter into form, but to the production of matter its self. But after this he takes a great deal of pains to search out the true meaning of *Plato* concerning the *Origine* of *Hyle*, and mentions the great *disensions* among the *Platonists* about it, and the *obscurity* of the *Timaeus* in it. To him therefore I refer the Reader: Who likewise brings in *Numenius* largely discoursing concerning the opinion of *Pythagoras* about it, who condemns all those, as not understanding *Pythagoras*, who attribute to him the production of the indeterminate *Hyle*. These are his words: *Numenius ex Pythagoræ magisterio Stoicorum hoc de initiis dogma refellens, Pythagoræ dogmate, cui concinere dicit dogma Platonicum, ait Pythagoram, Deum quidem singularitatis nominasse Col. nomine appellasse sylvam vero dicitatis. Quam dicitatem indeterminatam quidem, minime genitam, limitatam vero, generatam esse dicere. Hoc est, antequam exornaretur quidem, formamque & ordinem nancisceretur, sine ortu & generatione exornatam vero atque illustratam, à Digestore Deo esse generatam. Atque ita quia generationis sit fortuna posterior, inornatum illud minime generatum, æquavum Deo, à quo est*

Chalcid. in Timæo 377

P. 401.

Page. 393.

est ordinatum, intelligi debeat. Sed nonnullos Pythagoreos, vim sententia non recte affectos, putasse, dici etiam illam indeterminatam & immensam divinitatem, ab una singularitate institutam, recedente à natura sua singularitate, & in divinitatis habitum migrante. But however these Pythagoreans might be deceived, who thought the Unity its self became the Divinity; yet it is evident by *Numenius*, that he looked on the undetermined and confused matter to have been coeval with God himself and not produced by him. And if *Numenius* be as much to be credited in this as when he calls *Plato*, *Moses Atticus*, then the Creation of Universal matter can be no part of *Pythagoras* his Philosophick Cabala. But whatever were the opinions of *Plato* and *Pythagoras* concerning the first origine of matter, we are certain that the *Stoicks* generally asserted the improdution of matter, and make that to be as necessary a passive principle for the Being of the World, as God is the active and efficient cause. So *Diogenes Laertius* reports of the Stoical principles concerning the Origine of the Universe : *Δυνάμις ἡ αὐτοῖς ἀρχὴς τῷ ᾧ ἕλκεν τὰ πρὸς τὸ μέγιστον, καὶ τὸ μέγιστον τὸ αὐτὸ ὅτι πρὸς ἑαυτὴν τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ νοῦ καὶ τὴν ὕλην, καὶ ἡ αὐτὴ ἀρχὴς καὶ τὸ πρῶτον.* They make two principles of the Universe, one active, and the other passive; the passive, an essence without quality, called *Hyle* or confused matter; the active, the reason which acts in the other, which is God: These two principles *Seneca* calls *causa* & *materia*. *Esse vero debet, scilicet he, aliquid unde fiat; deinde à quo fiat: hoc causa est, illud materia.* Although *Seneca* seems to make a query, of it elsewhere; *quantum Deus possit? materiam ipse sibi format, an datà naturæ?* But *Zeno* is express in *Stobæus*, *Ὁμοίαν αὐτῷ τῷ πᾶσι ὄντι καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ὅτι αὐτὸν ἀείρει, ὅτι αὐτὸν ἀείρει.* The first essence of all, is matter, which is Eternal, and not capable of accession or diminution. To the same purpose *Chalcidius* speaks, *Stoici ortum sylvæ rejiciunt, quin potius Ipsam & Deum, duo totius rei sumunt initia; Deum, ut opificem; Sylvam, ut quæ operationi subjiaciatur. Una quidem essentia pradisos facientem, & quod sit ac patitur, id corpus esse, diversa vero virtute; quia faciat, Deum; quia fiat, Sylvam esse.*

V. *Zenon.*V. *Lipsium*
in *Physol.*
Stoic. I. c. 4.

Epist. 65.

Præfat. ad
Nat.Quæst.
Eclog. Phy-
sic.1a Tim.
p 382.

§. 10.

Having now found out the certain assertors among the
Heathens

Heathen Philosophers of the eternity and improduction of matter as the passive principle of things, we come to examine the reason of this Hypothesis, and whether there were foundation enough for this matter to subsist upon from all Eternity? It might be sufficient prejudice against this opinion, that it was built on the same infirm conclusions which that of the Eternity of the whole world was, viz. that *Maxim* which *Lippius* attributes to *Democritus*, but was embraced by all those Philosophers who denied production of matter, *unde in re* *Physiol.*
in ortu mundi, unde eis in re de pceptum, that nothing could *Stoic. l. 2:*
be produced out of nothing, nor could return into nothing, which c. 2.
as we have already said was only taken up from the established order of the Universe, and the manner of production of material Beings. But this is not all we have to charge this Hypothesis with; for,

1. It is repugnant to the natural notion of a Deity, which most imply in it an Omnipotent Power; For otherwise we degrade him to the imbecillity of finite creatures, if he cannot produce any thing which doth not imply a contradiction: but what contradiction is there in this, that God should give a Being to that which had none before? For that is all we understand by Creation, viz. the producing of something out of nothing, or which had nothing, out of which it was produced. Now what repugnancy is there to any free principle of Reason, that a Power Infinite should raise an Insect into Being, without any passive Principle out of which it was caused; and if an Infinite Power can do that, it may as well produce the world out of nothing, else the Power would not be Infinite; for it would have its bounds set, that thus far it could go and no further. Now if such a Power in God implies no contradiction in its self, I say the asserting the necessary existence of matter implies a contradiction to this Power. For, 1. A power to produce something out of nothing would be to no purpose, if a passive principle, or pre-existent matter be necessary to the production of any thing; and so that Being which hath a power to produce something out of nothing, hath only a power to produce something out of something, which is a plain contradiction. 2. If God hath a Power to produce something out of nothing, either this Power doth extend

tend to the production of this matter, or not; if it doth, then it depends on him; if not, his power is not infinite and so the same power is infinite and not infinite; which is another contradiction. So that it is plainly repugnant to the notion of a God to assert the necessary and eternal existence of matter.

2. If matter be unproduced, then necessary existence must belong to it as well as to God; and if necessary existence belongs to matter, infinite power must belong to it too; For what ever necessarily exists, is self-originated; what ever is self-originated, could not by any cause whatsoever be hindered from Being; what cannot by any cause be hindered from Being, hath I. fixite power; what hath Infinite power, may produce any thing, and is God, and so matter cannot be a meer passive principle, but must be an active, and so must be God himself, or else there must be more Gods then one. To an argument something of this nature *Hermogenes* in *Tertullian* replies, that matter would not lose the name or nature of matter, because of its coterminity with God, neither could it be God merely on that account, unless it had other things that were agreeable to the nature of God as well as that. But I have already shewed that necessary existence implyes other perfections going along with it: which is likewise thus proved by *Tertullian* in answer to *Hermogenes*; the reason of the imperfections which are to be seen in any creatures, is from hence, that they derive their Beings from a higher Cause, who creates them in what order he pleases; but that which hath its original from its self, must on that account want those imperfections which other creatures in the world have; and therefore if necessary existence be of the nature of matter, all other perfections must belong to it too: and so there can be no superiority and inferiority between God and matter, because on both sides there will be necessary existence. *Divinitas gradum non habet, utpote unica*: and so the eternal existence of matter is repugnant to Unity of God.

3. It is repugnant to the Independency of God: for it makes God subject to matter, and not matter to God. For if God cannot produce any thing without preexistent matter, the

matter

Perf. H.
mag. c. 4.

Cap. 7.

matter is necessary to his action, and so God must depend on that which he can do nothing without; and so Gods using matter, is as *Tertullian* speaks, *ex necessitate mediocritatis sue*, to help him in the production of things. *Nemo non subjiciatur ei cuius eget ut possit uti*, as he goes on. Thus matter *Cap. 8.* at last is crept above the *Deity*, that God can do nothing without its aid and concurrence; and so as *Tertullian* sharply says: *God is beholding to matter for ever being known to the world; Grande beneficium Deo contulit ut haberet hodie per quam Deus cognosceretur, & Omnipotens vocaretur, nisi quod jam non omnipotens, si non & hoc potens ex nihilo omnia presteret.* Thus we see how irreconcilable this *Hypothesis* is with these *Attributes* of God.

4. It is repugnant to the immensity of God. For either God did exist separate from this eternal matter, or was conjoyned with it; if conjoyned with it, then both made but one Being, as *Maximus*, or *Origen* argues; if separate from it, then there must be something between them, and so there will be three real improduced things. If it be answered that they are neither conjoyned nor separate, but God is in matter as in his proper place, as the *Stoicks* asserted, it is easily replied, that either then he is in a part of matter, or the whole matter, if in a part only, he cannot be immense; if in the whole as his adequate place, how could he then ever frame the world? For either he must then recede from that part in which he was, and contract himself into a narrower compass that he might fashion that part of the world which he was about, or else he must likewise frame part of himself with that part of the World which he was then framing of, which consequence is unavoydable on the *Stoical Hypothesis* of Gods being corporeal and confined to the World as his proper place. And so much for this second *Hypothesis* concerning the *Origine* of the *Universe*, which supposeth the eternity of matter as coexisting with God. Orig. Phil. 10. c. 24.

I come now to that which makes most noise in the world, §. 1. which is the *Atomical* or *Epicurean Hypothesis*, but will appear to be as irrational as either of the foregoing, as far as it concerns the giving an account of the *Origine* of the *Universe*. For otherwise supposing a *Deity* which produced

duced the world and put it into the order it is now in, and supremely governs all things in the world, that many of the *Phænomena* of the *Universe* are far more intelligibly explained by *matter* and *motion* than by *substantial forms*, and *real qualities*, few free and unprejudiced minds do now scruple. But because these little particles of *matter* may give a tolerable account of many appearances of *nature*, that therefore there should be nothing else but *matter* and *motion* in the world, and that the *Origine* of the *Universe* should be from no wiser Principle than the casual concurrence of these *Atoms*, is one of the evidences of the proneness of men's minds to be intoxicated with those opinions they are once in love with. When they are not content to allow an *Hypothesis* its due place and subserviency to *God* and *providence*, but think these *Atoms* have no force at all in them, unless they can extrude a *Deity* quite out of the world. For it is most evident that it was not so much the *Truth* as the *serviceableness* of this *Hypothesis*, which hath given it entertainment among men of *Atheistical* spirits. *Epicurus* himself in his *Epistle* to *Pythocles*, urgeth that as a considerable circumstance in his opinion, that he brought no *God* down upon the stage to put things in order, *ἡ δὲ θεὰ ποῖος ὅπως τὸν κόσμον ἐποίησεν*, which his Paraphrast *Lucretius* hath thus rendered,

Apud.
Diog. La-
ert. l. 10.
Lucret. de
Nat. l. 5.

*Nequaquam nobis divinitus esse paratam
Naturam rerum,*

If this opinion then be true, the *History* of the *Creation* quite falls to the ground, on which account we are obliged more particularly to consider the *Reason* of it. The *Hypothesis* then of *Epicurus*, is, that before the *World* was brought into that form and order it is now in, there was an infinite empty space in which were an innumerable company of solid particles or *Atoms* of different sizes and shapes, which by their weight were in continual motion, and that by the various occurrences of these all the bodies of the *Universe* were framed into that order they now are in. Which is fully expressed by *Dionysius* in *Eusebius*, and very agreeably to the sense of *Epicurus* in his *Epistles*

Ch. 2. The Divine Authority of the Scriptures asserted. 449

Epistles to Herodotus and Pythocles, and to what Plutarch ^{Præp.}
reports of the sense of Epicurus, though he names him not ^{Evang. l.}
(if at least that book be his which *Muretus* denies) the ^{14. c. 22.}
words of *Dionysius* are these concerning the *Epicureans*, ^{p. 221.}
ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων αὐτοῦ περὶ τῆς ἀφ' αὐτῶν πύλας καὶ συμπεριεσθῆναι τῶν σωματικῶν, ^{ed. R. St.}
καὶ ἀφ' αὐτῶν, καὶ πρὸς αὐτῶν κατὰ τὴν ἀφ' αὐτῶν περὶ τῆς ἀφ' αὐτῶν, ^{De Placitis}
καὶ ἀφ' αὐτῶν τὰς ἀτομὰς αἷς ἔτυχον ἐν τῷ κατὰ φύσιν περὶ αὐτῶν, ἀτομῶν ^{Phil. l. 1 c.}
τῶν συμπεριεσθῆναι ἀλλήλους ὡς ἔτυχον ἀτομῶν καὶ συμπεριεσθῆναι δ' ἵνα τὸ ^{4. Annot. in}
πλεονεχέον ἀλλήλων ὀφθαλμῶν, καὶ ἔτι τὸν κόσμον, καὶ τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ ^{Senec. de}
μᾶλλον ὅς κόσμος ἀπὸ πύλων ἀποτλήν. So that according to this opi- ^{provid.}
nion, all the account we have of the Origin of the world, is
from this general Rendes-vous of Atoms in this infinite space,
in which after many encounters and facings about, they fell
into their several troops, and made up that ordered Battalia
which now the World is the Scheme of. It was not impru-
dently done of Epicurus to make the worlds infinite, as well
as his space and Atoms. For by the same reason that his Atoms
would make one world, they might make a thousand; and
who would spare for worlds, when he might make them so
easily? *Lucretius* gives us in so exact an account of the
several courses the Atoms took up in disposing themselves
into bodies, as though he had been Muster-Master-General
at that great Rendes-vous; for thus he speaks of his Atoms,

*Quæ quia multimodis, multis mutata per omne
Ex Infinito vexantur percita plagis,
Omne genus motus & cætus experiundo,
Tandem deveniunt in taleis disposituras,
Qualibus hæc rabus consistit summa creata.*

De Nat.
ter. l. 1.

And more particularly afterwards;

*Sed quia multa modis multis primordia rerum
Ex Infinito jam tempore percita plagis,
Ponderibusque suis consueverunt concita ferri,
Omnimodisque coire, atque omnia pertentare,
Quæcumque inter se possunt congressa creare;
Ut non sit mirum, si in taleis disposituras*

Lib. 5.

*Deciderunt quoque, & in taleis vendere meatus,
Qualibus hæc rerum generatur nunc summa novando.*

Thus we see the substance of the Epicurean Hypothesis, that

M m m

there

De Nat.
Deor. l. 2.

there were an *Infinite* number of *Atoms*, which by their frequent *occurrences* did at last meet with those of the same nature with them, and these being conjoynd together made up those *bodies* which we see: so that all the account we are able to give according to this *Hypothesis* of all the *Phænomena* of the *Universe*, is from the fortuitous *concourse* of the *Atoms* in the first forming of the *World*, and the different contexture of them in *bodies*. And this was delivered by the ancient *Epicureans*, not with any doubt or *hesitation*, but with the greatest confidence imaginable. So *Tully* observes of *Velleius* the *Epicurean*, beginning his discourse, *fidenter sane, ut solent isti, nihil tam verens quam ne dubitare de aliquare videretur; tanquam modo ex Deorum concilio, & ex Epicuri intermundiis descendisset*: Confidence was the peculiar genius of that sect, which we shall see in them to be accompanied with very little reason.

SECT. 12. For those two things which make any principles in Philosophy to be rejected; this *Atomical Hypothesis* is unavoidably charged with: and those are, If the principles be taken up without sufficient ground in reason for them; and if they cannot give any sufficient account of the *Phænomena* of the world. I shall therefore make it appear, that this *Hypothesis*, as to the Origin of the *Universe*, is first, merely precarious, and built on no sufficient grounds of Reason. Secondly, That it cannot give any satisfactory account of the Origin of things.

1. That it is a precarious *Hypothesis*, and hath no evidence of Reason on which it should be taken up; and that will be proved by two things: 1. It is such an *Hypothesis* as the *Epicureans* themselves could have no certainty of according to their own principles. 2. That the main principles of the *Hypothesis* its self are repugnant to those *Catholic* Laws of nature which are observed in the *Universe*.

1. The *Epicureans* according to their own principles could have no certainty of the truth of this *Hypothesis*. And that
1. Because they could have no certain evidence of its truth.
2. Because their way of proving it was insufficient.

1. That they could have no certain evidence of the truth of it; I prove from those criteria, which *Epicurus* lays down as the only certain Rules of judging the truth of things by;
and

and those were *Sense, Anticipation and Passion*. Let *sense* be never so infallible a rule of judgement, yet it is impossible there should be any evidence to *sense* of the truth of this Hypothesis; and let him extend his *reservacion* as long as he please, which was his great help for correcting the errors of *sense*, viz. as it was in the Roman Court when the case was not clear, *ampliandum est*; So *Epicurus* would have the object represented every way it could be before he pass his judgement; yet this prudent caution would do him no good for this Hypothesis, unless he were so wise as to stay till this world were crumbled into *Atoms* again, that by that he might judge of the origins of it. There is but one way left to finde out the truth of things *inevidents to sense*, (as by *Epicurus* his own confession all these *Atoms* are, which are now the component particles of bodies; much more those which by their fortuitous concourse gave Being to the world) and that is, if something evident to *sense* doth apparently prove it, which is his way of proving a *Vacuity* in nature from motion; but though that be easily answered by principles different from those of *Epicurus*, and more rational; yet that very way of probation fails him in his present Hypothesis. For what is there evident to *sense* which proves a fortuitous concourse of *Atoms* for the production of things? nay, if we grant him that the composition of bodies is nothing else but the texture of these insensible particles, yet this is far from being an evidence to *sense*, that these particles without any wise and directing providence should make up such bodies as we see in the world. And here when we speak of the evidence of *sense*, we may well ask as the Stoick in Tully doth, whether ever *Epicurus* found a Poem made by the casual throwing of letters together; and if a concourse of *Atoms* did produce the world, *cur porticum, cur templum, cur domum, cur urbem non potest? why did it never produce* a cloyster, a temple, a house, a city, which are far easier things than the world? I know *Epicurus* will soon reply, that things are otherwise in the world now then when it was first produced; I grant it, and from thence prove, that because no such thing ever happens in the world now, as a merely casual concourse of *Atoms* to produce any thing, *Epi-*

*De Nat.
Deor. l. 2.*

ENRUM could have no evidence from *sense* at all to finde out the truth of this *Hypothesis* by. And as little relief can he finde from his second *Criterium*, viz. *Anticipation*; For by his own acknowledgement, all *anticipation* depends on the *senses*, and men have it only one of these four wayes. 1. By *incurfion*, as the *species* of a man is preserved by the sight of him. 2. By *proportion*, as we can enlarge or contract that *species* of a man either into a Giant or Pigmy. 3. By *similitude*, as we may fancy the image of a City by resemblance to one which we have seen. 4. By *composition*, whereby we may joyn different images together, as of a horse and man to make a *Centaur*. Now though it be very questionable how some of these wayes belong to a *Criterium* of truth, yet none of them reach our case; for there can be no *incurfion* of *insensible* particles as such upon our senses; We may indeed by *proportion* imagine the *parvitude* of them; but what is this to the proving the truth of the *Hypothesis*? *Similitude* can do no good, unless *Epicurus* had ever seen a world made so; the only relief must be from *composition*, and that will prove the *Origin* of the world by *Atoms* to be as true, as that there are *Centaur*s in the world, which we verily believe. These are the only *Criteria* by which *Epicurus* would judge of the truth of natural things (for the third, *Passion* relates wholly to things *Moral* and not *Physical*) and now let any one judge, whether the *Hypothesis* of the *Origin* of the *Universe* by *Atoms* can ever be proved true, either by the judgement of *sense*, or by *Anticipation*.

- SECT. 13. The way they had to prove this *Hypothesis* was insufficient; 2. and that was by proving that the *bodies* of the World are compounded of such *insensible* particles. Now, granting the thing, I deny the consequence; for what though the composition of *bodies* be from the contexture of *Atoms*, doth it therefore follow, that these particles did casually produce these *bodies*? nay, doth it at all follow, that because *bodies* upon their resolution do fall into *insensible* particles of different size, figure and motion, therefore these particles must be *præexistent* to all *bodies* in the world? For it is plain, that there is now an *Universal* lump of matter out of which these *insensible* particles arise; and whether they return on the

the dissolution of bodies; and all these various corpuscles may be of the same uniform substance, only with the alteration of size, shape and motion; but what then? Doth this prove; that because particular bodies do now emerge out of the various configuration and motion of insensible particles of that matter which exists in the World, that therefore this whole matter was produced by the casual occurrences of these Atoms? It will ask more time and pains than is usually taken by the Philosophers either ancient or modern, to prove that those things whatsoever they are, whether elements or particles, out of which bodies are supposed to be compounded, do exist separately from such compounded bodies, and antecedently to them. We finde no Aristotelian elements pure in the World, nor any particles of matter destitute of such a size, figure and motion as doth make some body or other. From whence then can we infer either the existence of Aristotles *materia prima*, without quiddity, quantity or quality, or the Epicurean Atoms without such a contexture as make up some bodies in the World? Our profound Naturalist Dr. Harvey, after his most accurate search into the nature and Generation of things, delivers this as his experience and judgement concerning the commonly reputed elements or principles of bodies. For speaking of the different opinions of Empedocles and Hippocrates, and Democritus, and Epicurus, concerning the composition of bodies, he adds, *Ego vero neque in animalium productione, nec omnino in ulla corporum similium generatione, (sive ea partium animalium, sive plantarum, lapidum mineralium, &c. fuerit) vel congregationem ejusmodi, vel miscibilia diversa in generationis opere unienda praexistere, observare unquam potui.* And after explaining the way which he conceived most rational and consonant to Experience in the Generation of things, he concludes his Discourse with these words; *Idemque in omni generatione fieri crediderim; adeo ut corpora similia mista, elementa sua tempore priora non habeant, sed illa potius elementis suis prius existant (nempe Empedocli atque Aristotelis igne, aqua aëre, terra; vel Chymicorum sale, sulphure, & Mercurio; aut Democriti Atomis) utpote natura quoque ipsis perfectiora. Sunt, inquam, mista & composita, etiam tempore*

De Generatione Animalium Exercit. 72.

priora elementis quibuslibet sic dictis, in qua illa corrumpuntur & desinunt; dissolvuntur scilicet in ista ratione potius quam re ipsa & actu. Elementa itaque quae dicuntur, non sunt priora istis rebus. quae generantur aut oriuntur; sed posteriora potius, & reliqua magis quam principia. Neque Aristoteles ipsemet aut alius quispiam unquam demonstravit, elementa in rerum natura separatim existere, aut principia esse corporum simularium. If then none of these things which bodies are resolved into, and are supposed to be compounded of, either have been or can be proved to exist separate from and antecedent to those bodies which they compound, what then becomes of all our company of *Atoms* which are supposed by their concurrence in an *Infinite* space to be the *Origine* of the world? I know not where to find them; unless dancing with the *Schoolmens Chimara's* in a *Vacuum*, or in a space as empty as the *Infinite* one, viz. some *Epicureans* brains. Neither therein will they be much unlike their great *Master*, *Epicurus*, if we believe the character which the *Stoick* in *Tully* gives of him, who saith he was *homo sine arte, sine literis, insulsus in omnes, sine acumine ullo, sine auctoritate, sine lepore*. But allowing the *Stoick* some of that passion, (which he disclaimed so much) in these words; yet we may rather believe what *Tully* himself elsewhere speaks of *Epicurus* his sentiments, that they were none of them handsome or becoming a man. *At ille quid sentis?* saith he of *Epicurus*; and soon replies, *sentis autem nihil unquam elegans, nihil decorum*; And in another place speaking of his *Morals*, he sayes, *nihil generosum sapit atque magnificum*; there was nothing noble and generous in him. Which censure of *Epicurus*, all the pains that *P. Gassendus* hath taken in the vindication of the life and opinions of *Epicurus*, hath not been able to wipe off. For although we should yield what that learned man so much contends for, that all the calumnies which were cast on *Epicurus* arise from the *Antipathy* between *Zeno* and the following *Stoicks*, and the *School* of *Epicurus*; yet all this will not make *Epicurus* to have been comparable with some other *Philosophers* for parts and judgments, whose principles have somewhat more generous and venerable in them, than the *Morals* of *Epicurus* had, taking them in their more refined sense.

But

De Nat.
Deor. l. 2.

De Divi-
nat. l. 1.
De Finibus
lib. 1.

But it is not the *Morality* of *Epicurus* which we now enquire after; our business is to see how well he acquits himself in rendering an account of the *Origin* of the *Universe* without a *Deity*. And so we come to consider the *Hypothesis* its self, whether it be *rational* or no, or consistent with the *Catholick Laws of Nature* which appears in the *World*. Two things I shall here enquire into, which are the main principles of *Epicurus*, viz. the motion of these *Atoms* in the *Infinite Space*, and the manner of the concretion of *bodies* by the concurrence of these *Atoms*.

1. I begin with their *motion*; which *Epicurus* attributes to his *Atoms* without any *hesitation*, and yet never undertakes to give an account of the *Origin* of that *motion*; which argues his whole *Hypothesis* to be extremely *precarious*. The thing then, (which he must assume as his main principle, without which all his other do nothing) is, that *motion* doth inseparably belong to the least *Atom* or *insensible particle*; For without this there cannot be imagined any concurrence of *Atoms* at all, much less any such *texture* of *bodies* out of them. But for one to say that *Atoms* move, because it is their nature to move, and give no other account of it, is so *precarious*, that it will never give the least satisfaction to an inquisitive mind. And it will be the least of all pardonable in the exploders of *substantial forms* and *occult qualities*, when the *Origin* of the whole world is resolved into an *occult quality* which gives *motion* to *Atoms*. And herein the *Atomists* out-do the most credulous *Peripatericks*, seeing they lay the prime foundation of the world and of their own *Philosophy* together in a thing they can give no rational account of at all, which is, the *motion* of *Atoms* in an *Infinite Vacuity*. If it be replied, which is all *Epicurus* hath to say, that the *motion* of *Atoms* depends upon their *gravity*; the question returns upon him with the same violence, how comes this *gravity* to belong to these *Atoms* in such an *empty space*, where there can be no *impulsion* from other *bodies*, no *attraction* from any *magnetick particles* which are supposed to be the causes of the descent of heavy *bodies*? nay, *Epicurus* himself takes away any center of that *motion* of *Atoms*; and yet attributes a necessary descent to his *Atoms* by virtue of their

Physic. f. 1.
 l. 1. c. 7.
 De apoa-
 rent Magni-
 tud. solus
 humilis &
 sublimis
 ep. 4. sect. 3.
 De motu.
 Physic. f. 1.
 l. 6. c. 2.
 V. ep. de
 motu im-
 p. esset à mo-
 tore tran-
 sato. To 3.
 97.

their gravity; and if a *Philosopher* may beg such things as these are, so repugnant to the *Phænomena* of nature, without assigning any other reason for them, but that it is their nature; let us never venture *Philosophizing* more; but sit down in that contented piece of *Ignorance* which attributes the causes of every thing into *specifick forms* and occult qualities. For this is so shameful a piece of *beggery*, that *P. Gassendus* doth more then once disclaim it, and in his discourse of motion doth prove an impossibility of motion in an *Infinite empty space*. Might not *Epicurus* then have saved his credit better by sitting down with the opinions of his fore-fathers, then thus to go a *begging* for such *Hypotheses*, which none, who are not resolved to be *Ignorant*, will be ready to grant him?

Sect. 15.
 Prep. E-
 vangel. l.
 14. c. 12.

But yet this is not all, but according to this fundamental principle of *Epicurus*, viz. that there is a principle of motion in every insensible particle of matter, he plainly overthrows another principle of his, which is the *solidity* and different magnitude of these *Atoms*. These particles are supposed so solid, that *Dionysius in Ensebius* tells us the account given why they are called *ἄτμοι*, was διὰ τὸν αὐτὸν σφῆρα, because of their *indissoluble firmness*; and the different sizes of these *Atoms* is so necessary a principle, that from thence they undertake to resolve many *Phænomena* of the *Universe*: let us now see how consistent these things are with the inseparable property of motion belonging to *Atoms*: For if there be particles of such different sizes, then it is plain that there are some particles which may not only be conceived to be bigger then others, but are really so; and so there must be more parts of matter imagined in this bigger particle then in another less; and if there be more parts, these parts may be conceived separate from each other, that this particle may be equal to the other; now then, I demand, If motion doth inseparably belong to the least particle of matter, how comes one to be bigger then the other? For herein we see that every particle is not in distinct motion; for there cannot but be more imaginable particles in an *Atom* of a bigger size then in a less; and if so, there must be some union of those imaginable particles in that bigger *Atom*; and how could

such

such an union be without rest, and what rest could there be if motion doth inseparably belong to every particle of matter? And so it must be in all those *Atoms* which are supposed to have angles and hooks, in order to their better catching hold of each other for the composition of bodies; how come these hooks and angles to be annexed to this *Atom*? for an *Atom* may be without them. Whence comes this union, if such a principle of motion, be in each particle? It is answered, that motion did belong to all these particles, but by degrees the lesser particles hitting together made up these angled and hooked particles: I soon reply, that the difficulty returns more strongly; for if these angled and hooked particles be supposed necessary to the contexture and union of bodies, how came those least imaginable particles ever to unite without such hooks and angles? And so the question will return in *Infinitum*. If then the solidity and indivisibility of these angled *Atoms*, doth depend on the union and rest of those lesser imaginable particles joyned together, then it is evident that motion is no inseparable property of all these particles, but some are capable of union, in order to the making of such hooks and angles, which are necessary for the contexture of bodies; and where there is union and solidity, there is rest, which is at least accompanied with it, if it be not one of the great causes of it. And without which the *Atomists* of all other Philosophers will be least able to give an account of firmness in bodies, when they make bodies to consist of an aggregation of particles, by which it will be very hard finding a sufficient account of the difference between fluid and firm bodies, unless it be from the quicker motion and agitation of the particles of fluid bodies, and the rest of the small and contiguous parts that make up the firm body, *v. Des Cartes* according to that Catholick Law of nature, whereby things *res Princip.* continue in the state they are in till some stronger force puts them out of it. The only thing which the *Epicurean Atomists* 55. 56. have left to give any account of the solidity of particles of such different sizes, is, the want of vacuity; for, say they, the ground of divisibility of bodies is the interspersion of a disseminated Vacuum, now where there is no vacuity, though the particles be of different size, yet they may be solid and indivisible.

History of
Fluid. and
Firmness.
p. 203.

ble. But this is taken off by the instance produced against other persons by that ingenious & Honourable person M. Boyle in his *Physiological Essayes*, which is to this purpose; Suppose two of these presumed indivisible particles, both smooth and of a Cubical figure should happen to lye upon one another, and a third should chance to be fully placed upon the upper of the two; what should hinder but that this Aggregate may by the violent knock of some other corpuscles be broken in the midst of the whole concretion, and consequently in the middlemost body? For suppose them as solid as may be; yet since corpuscles as hard as they, can be made very violently to knock against them, why may not these grate or break the middlemost corpuscles, or any of the others? And if there be a possibility of a breaking off these Cubical particles in the middle, then meer want of Vacuity is no sufficient account of their being indivisible. By this we see how far the Atomists are from giving any rational account of the Origine of the motion of the Atoms themselves without a Deity.

§. 16.

2. Supposing this motion to be granted them, yet they cannot give any satisfactory account of the manner of concretion of bodies by the casual occurrings of these Atoms moving in an infinite empty space. Which appears from those gross and extravagant suppositions of Epicurus, in order to the making these Atoms of his so hit together that they make up any bodies by their contexture.

1. He supposeth as it were two regions, a superiour and inferior in an infinite empty space, which hath no center at all in it, nor any body, from which to measure those respects of above and below; as appears by his *Epistle to Hecaton*, wherein he saith, These terms of *ad* and *kata*, or upwards and downwards, must be conceived without any bounds or limits at all. So that though we conceive something superior, we must imagine nothing supreme; and so on the contrary. Whereby it is evident as Gassendus confesseth, that Epicurus thought the surface of the earth to be a plain, and this plain to be continued up in a level superficies to the heavens, and so to all that immense space of the Universe. So that all those heavy bodies which should fall downwards in any parts of the widest distance on the earth, as in Europe, Asia, and Africa, would

Physic §. 1.
l. 3. c. 7.

would never meet (if they continued their motion) in the center of the earth, but would continue their motion still in a parallel line; and so he imagined that which is said to be above as to us, was really the upper part of the world, and so the descent of his Atoms must necessarily be downwards towards the earth, according to the weight of them. And was not this a worthy Mathematical supposition, for one who would undertake to give an account of the *Origins* of the Universe without a Deity?

This motion of descent by reason of the gravity of Atoms would not serve his turn; for if the Atoms moved downwards thus in a parallel line, how was it possible for them ever to meet for the contexture of bodies? Now for this purpose he invented a motion of declination; for finding the motion *ad lineam*, or *ad perpendiculum* as some call it, could not possibly produce those varieties of bodies which are in the Universe, he supposed therefore the descent not to be in a perpendicular right line, but to decline a little, that so several particles in their descent might make some occurrences one upon another. And this Epicurus added to Democritus; but therein, as Tully observes, was very unhappy, that where he adds to Democritus, *ea qua corrigere vult, mihi quidem depravare videatur*; that he marr'd what Democritus had said, by mending of it. The reason of which motion of declination, is thus given by Lucretius,

*De rerum
nat. l. 2.*

*Quod nisi declinare solerent, omnia deorsum
Imbris nisi gutta caderent per Inane profundum;
Nec foret offensus natus, neque plaga creata
Principiis, ita nil unquam natura creasset.*

It was obvious to object, that according to the principles of Epicurus, there could have been no concurrence at all of Atoms in an infinite Space, on the two grounds he went on, which were the natural descent of Atoms, and the equal velocity of the motion of all Atoms of what size so ever, which he likewise asserted (although one would think if gravity were the cause of motion, then the more gravity, the swifter the motion would be) from hence, I say, it were not easie to conceive

De Fin.
bon. & mal.
lib. 1.

how the *Atoms* should embrace each other in a parallel line, if they fell down, as *Lucretius* express it, like drops of rain; and therefore they saw a necessity to make their motion decline a little, that so they might juggle and hit one upon another. But this oblique motion of the *Atoms*, though it be the only refuge left to save the *Origine* of things by a course of *Atoms*, is yet as precarious and without reason as any other supposition of theirs whatsoever. *Tully* chargeth this motion of declination with two great faults, *frivolity*, and *inefficacy*, *qua cum res tota ficta sit pueriliter, tum ne efficiat quidem quod vult*. It is a childish fancy and to no purpose: For first, it is asserted without any reason at all given for it, which is unworthy a *Philosopher*; neither is it to any purpose; for if all *Atoms*, saith he, decline in their motion, then none of them will stick together; if some decline, and others do not, this is as precarious as any thing can be imagined, to assign a diversity of motion in indivisible particles, which yet have all the same velocity of motion; and, as *Tully* saith, *Hoc erit quasi provincias atomis dare, qua recte, qua oblique ferantur*: as though *Epicurus* were the General at this *Rendering* of *Atoms*, who stands ready to appoint every one his task and motion. This *Plutarch* tells us was the great charge against *Epicurus* *ὅτι αἰσίνον ἰσχυρῶς αἰσίνον ἐν τῷ πᾶσι ὄντι, ὅτι*, because he introduced such a motion of declination out of nothing upon no pretence of reason. And *Turnebus* tells us, that the ground why they desired so small a declination, was because they were conscious to themselves, that it was founded upon no ground of reason; *Et Epicurei sibi consciī culpa, timide eam ponebant, & minimam sibi postulabant*. To which purpose *Turnebus* cites these verses of *Lucretius*,

Lib. 1.

*Quare etiam atque etiam paulum inclinare necesse est
Corpora, nec plusquam minimum, ne fingere motus
Obliquos videamur, & id res vera refutet.
Namque hoc in promptu manifestumque esse videmus
Pondera quantum in se est, non posse obliqua meare
E supero cum precipitant, quod cernere possis.
Sed nihil omnino recta regione viai
Declinare, quis est qui possit cernere sese?*

But this argument of *Lucretius* will hold if at all, further then this little *declination* (for it is no more they desire then as little as may be imagined, *quo nihil possit fieri minus*, *Tully* expresseth it) but if they may decline a little, why not a great deal more? nay it is impossible to conceive, but a little oblique motion at first will in an infinite space grow to be very oblique; for there is nothing to hinder the motion which way it bends; now if there be never so little motion of *declination*, the *Atom* will be inclined that way; and what then should hinder, but that the obliquity in a motion through a great space should at last come to be very great; there being no center at all to guide the motion, towards, and the gravity not hindering this little *declination*? Therefore *Tully* asks that question, *Cur declinet uno minimo, non declinet duobus aut tribus?* why only it declines one *minime*, and not two or three; for, saith he, it is no impulsion from any other *Atom* *Fato*, which makes it decline that one *minime*; neither is there any impediment in the space to hinder it from declining more; so that, as he well saith, *optare hoc quidem est, non disputare*, this is to beg *Hypotheses* and not to prove them, which is the thing we have proved *Epicurus* to do. Which was the first thing promised, *viz.* that this *Hypotheses* of *Epicurus* was very precarious, and is built on no foundation of reason.

2. It is unsatisfactory and insufficient, as well as precarious, §. 17. for should we grant his two main principles, *Atoms* and his infinite empty space; yet we deny that ever his *Atoms* with all their occurrences would ever produce those things which are in the *Universe*. To run through the noted *Phænomena* of the *Universe*, and to shew how insufficient an account the *Epicureans* are able to give of them, from a fortuitous concurrence of *Atoms*, is a task too large to be here undertaken. There are only three things which I shall rather suggest, then insist upon, to see what miserable shifts the *Epicureans* are driven to for the salving of them, and shall then leave it with the reader to judge, what unmeasurable confidence it is in any to reject the Creation of the *World* for the sake of the *Epicurean Hypotheses*; and whether it be not the height of credulity, as well as infidelity, to believe the *World* ever to have been made by a fortuitous concurrence of *Atoms*?

1. The great variety of appearances in nature, which are attributed to particles of the same nature, only with the alteration of size, shape, and motion. That some things in the world, should have no other reason given of them, may not only be tolerable, but rational, as in the objects and operations on the organs of sense, those affections which are mistaken for real qualities, &c. But that all those effects which are seen in nature should have no other cause but the different configuration and motion of Atoms, is the height of folly as well as impiety, to imagine that the particles of matter, as they are in men, should be capable of sensation, memory, intellection, volition, &c. merely because of a different shape, size, and motion from what they have in a piece of wood, is a riddle that requires a new configuration of Atoms in us to make us understand. May it not be hoped, that at least one time or other by this casual concurrence of Atoms, the particles may light to be of such a nature in stones, as to make them fly; in plants, to make them all sensitive; and in beasts to make them reason and discourse? What may hinder such a configuration or motion of particles, if all these effects are to be unputed to no higher principle? We see in other bodies what different appearances are caused by a sudden alteration of the particles of the matter of which they are compounded; why may it not fall out so in the things mentioned? neither can this be unreasonable to demand. 1. Because the motion of these particles of matter is casual still according to them; and who knows what chance may do? for the seminal principles themselves are, I suppose, according to them, of the same uniform matter with the rest of the world, and so are liable to different motion and configuration. 2. Because all particles of matter are supposed to be in continual motion, because of that disseminated Vacuity, which is presumed to be in the world, and because a Coarctate vacuity is not only asserted as possible, but as probably existent: I assume only then (that which is insisted on as probable) viz. that that space which lyes between our Atmosphere and the Stars is empty of any other thing, but only the rays of the Stars which pass through it; I then supposing it a vacuity, Whether would not the particles of those bodies which

which lye *contiguous* to that *space* presently *dislodge* from the *bodies* wherein they are, and begin a new *Rendezvous* of *Atoms* there? for all *Atoms* are supposed to be in *perpetual motion*; and the cause assigned, why in *solid bodies* they do not fly away, is, because of the *repercussion* of other *Atoms*, that when they once begin to *stir*, they receive such *knocks* as make them *quiet* in their places. Now this cannot hold in the *bodies contiguous* to this *space*; for both those *bodies* are more *fluid*, and so there is no such *knocking* of *particles* to keep them at *rest*; but, which is more, those which are *contiguous* have nothing at all to hinder them from *motion*, and so those *particles* will necessarily *remove* into that *empty space* where there is no *impediment* of their *motion*, and so the next *Atoms* to those must *remove*, because that *space* wherein the other were is made *empty* by their *removal*; and so the next, and so on, till not only the *air*, but the *whole mass* of the *earth* will on *supposition* of such a *vacuity* be dissolved into its first *particles*; which will all *mutiny* in the several *bodies* wherein they are, and never *rest* till they come to that *empty space*, where they may again *Rendezvous* together. So dangerous is the news of *Liberty*, or of an *empty space* to these *Democratical particles* of the *Universe*. Neither can I see how a *disseminated vacuity* can solve the difficulty; for those *particles* of the most *solid bodies*, being in continual *motion*, and the *ground* of their *union* being *repercussion*, it thence follows that towards that *part* where the *disseminated vacuum* is, the *particles* meeting with no such *strokes* may fairly take their leaves of the *bodies* they are in, and so one succeed in the place of another, till the *configuration* of the whole be *altered*, and consequently different *appearances* and *effects* may be caused in the same *bodies*, though it retules from *seminal principles*. So that according to the *Atomical principles*, no rational account can be given of those *effects* which are seen in nature. This *Dionysius* in *Eusebius*argeth against the *Atomists*, that from the same *principles* without evident *reason* given for it, they make of the same *uniform matter* some things *conspicuous* to sense, others not, some *short lived*, others *extreamly long-lived*. *Tiva 3 Enu pua ions 2; 3 avris amentv iolay.*

Prop. E-
vang. l. 14.
c. 24.

ἴσας, καὶ τῆς αὐτῆς ἀφάρτου φύσεως, καὶ οὗτοι οὗτοι μὴ ἀλλήλων, οὐ καὶ, καὶ οὗτοι ἄλλων, τὰ μὴ ὅτι θεῖα καὶ ἀνθρώπινα καὶ αἰώνια, οὐ αὐτοὶ φύσεως αἱ, σῶματα, ἢ μακροτέρα καὶ ἢ ὅτι ἴσως ἐνομαστωμένα, παρὶδὲν τι καὶ ἄρα; What ground can there be assigned of so vast a difference between things if they be all of the same nature, and differ only in size and shape? saith that excellent person, who there with a great deal of eloquence lays open the folly of the Atomical Philosophy, θαυμαστί γὰρ οὗτοι ἄπειρος ἢ διωκεμένα, δεξιωμένων τι ἀγέλας τοῦ φίλου καὶ ἀνταρκωμένων, οὐ μὴν τοῦ κατὰ φύσιν συνωκίας ἐπιγνώμενων. It is a rare Democracy of Atoms, saith he, where the friendly Atoms meet and embrace each other, and from thenceforward live in the closest society together.

Laeti. l. 10.

2. Not only the variety, but the exact order and beauty of the world is a thing unaccountable by the Atomical hypothesis. Were the whole world still a Hesiods Chaos (from the consideration of which Diogenes Laertius tells us Epicurus began to Philosophize) we might probably believe an agitation of particles (supposing matter created) might settle it in such a confused manner; but that there should be nothing else but a blind impetus of Atoms to produce those vast and most regular motions of the heavenly bodies, to order the passage of the Sun for so great convenience of nature, and for the alternate succession of the seasons of the year, which should cut such channels for the Ocean, and keep that vast body of the water (whose surface is higher then the earth) from overflowing it, which should furnish the earth with such seminal and prolific principles, as to provide food and nourishment for those Animals which live upon it, and furnish out every thing necessary for the comfort and delight of mans life; to believe, I say, that all these things came only from a blind and fortuitous concourse of Atoms, is the most prodigious piece of credulity and folly, that human nature is subject to. But this part which concerns the order and beauty of the parts of the Universe, and the argument thence, that it could be no blind fortuitous principle, but an Infinitely wise God, hath been so fully and judiciously handled by a learned Person already, that I shall rather choose to refer the Reader to his discourse then insist any more upon it.

D.H. More
Antid.
against
Atheism,
part 3.

3. The

3. *The production of mankind is a thing which the Atomists are most shamefully puzz'd with, as well as the Formation of the internal parts of mans body, of which I have already spoken in the precedent chapter. It would pityy one to see what lamentable shifts the Atomists are put to, to find out a way for the production of mankind, viz. That our seeming Mother the Earth, at last cast forth some kind of bag-like wombs upon the surfaces of the Earth; and these by degrees breaking, at last came out children, which were nourish'd by a kind of juyce of the Earth-like milk, by which they were brought up till they came to be men. Oh what will not Atheists believe, rather than a Duty and Providence! but lest we should seem to wrong the Atomists, hear what Censorinus saith of Epicurus; Is enim credidit limo calefactos uteros nescio quos, radicibus terra coherentes, primum increvisse, & infantibus ex se editis ingenitum lactis humorem, natura ministrante, prae misse; quos ita educatos & adultos, genus humanum propagasse. But because Lucretius may be thought to speak more impartially in the case, how rarely doth he describe it?*

*Censori: de
die Nat. l. 2.*

*Crescebant uteri terra radicibus apti,
Quos ubi tempore maturo patefecerit etas
Infantum, fugiens humorem, aurasque petissens,
Convertebat ibi natura foramina terre,
Et succum venis cogebat fundere apertis
Consimilem lactis; sicut nunc famina quaque
Quum peperit dulci repletur lacte, quod omnis
Impetus in mammae convertitur ille alimenti:
Terra cibum parvis, vestem vapor, herba cubile
Præbebat, multa & molli lanugine abundans.*

Had Lucretius been only a Poet, this might have pass'd for a handsomely described *Fable*; but to deliver it for a piece of *Philosophy*, makes it the greater *Mythologie*. That mans body was formed out of the earth we believe, because we have reason so to do; but that the earth should cast forth such *follicles*, as he expresseth it, and that men should be brought up in such a way as he describes, deserves a place among the

most incredible of *Poetick Fables*. But if *Poets* must be credited, how much more like a man did he speak, who told us,

*Natus homo est; five hunc divino semine fecit
Ille opifex rerum, Mundi melioris origo;
Sive recens tellus, seductaque nuper ab alto
Æthere, cognati retinebat semina cæli;
Quam satius Iapeto mistam fluvialis undis,
Finxit in effigiem moderantum cuncta Deorum.*

Thus have we considered the *Epicurean Hypothesis*, both as to the *Principles* on which it stands, and the *suitableness* of it to the *Phænomena* of the *Universe*; and I suppose now there cannot be the least shadow of reason found from the *Atomical Philosophy* to make us at all question that account of the *Origine* of the *Universe*, which ascribes it not to the fortuitous concurrence of *Atoms*, but to the *Infinite Wisdom* of a *Deity*. I conclude then this discourse of the *Epicurean Hypothesis* with the words of *Antomedon*, in the *Greek Epigram*.

Antholog.
l. 2. c. 15.

Τὰυτ' εἰδὼς σὸς ἐστὶν ἰδίῳ, μάρτυρ δ' Ἐπίκουρον ἴσασιν
Πῶ τὸ κενὸν ζῆταιν, καὶ τίς αἰ μὴν ἴσῃς.

*Learn to be wise; let Epicurus chase
To find his Atoms and his empty space.*

- §. 18. I come now to the *last Hypothesis* mentioned; which undertakes to give an account of the *Origine* of the *Universe* from the meer *Mechanical Laws* of motion and matter. Which is the Hypothesis of the late famous French *Philosopher* Mr. *Des Cartes*. For although there be as much reason as charity to believe that he never intended his *Hypothesis* as a foundation of *Atheism*, having made it so much his business to assert the existence of a *Deity* and immateriality of the soul; yet because it is apt to be abused to that end by persons *Atheistically* disposed, because of his ascribing so much to the power of matter; we shall therefore so far consider it as it undertakes

dertakes to give an account of the *Origine* of the *Universe* without a *Deity*. His *Hypothesis* therefore is briefly this. He ^{Princip.} takes it for granted, that all the matter of the world was at p. 3. *Art.* first of one *Uniform nature*, divisible into innumerable parts, 45. &c. and divided into many, which were all in motion; from hence he supposeth; 1. That all this matter of which the Universe is composed, was at first divided into equal particles of an indifferent size, and that they had all such a motion as is now found in the world. 2. That all these particles were not at first Spherical, because many such little Globes joyned together will not fill up a continued Space, but that of whatever figure they were at first, they would by continued motion become spherical, because they would have various circular motions; for, seeing that at first they were moved with so great force that one particle would be disjoyned from the other, the same force continuing, would serve to cut off all angles which are supposed in them, by their frequent excursions against each other; and so when the angles were cut off, they would become spherical. 3. He supposeth that no space is left empty, but when those round particles being joyned, leave some intervals between them, there are some more subtil particles of matter, which are ready to fill up those void spaces, which arise from those angles which were cut off from the other particles to make them spherical; which fragments of particles are so little, and acquire thereby such a celerity of motion; that by the force of that, they will be divided into innumerable little fragments, and so will fill up all those spaces which other particles could not enter in at. 4. That those particles which fill up the intervals between the spherical ones, have not all of them the same celerity of motion, because some of them are more undivided than others are, which filled up the space between three Globular particles when their angles were cut off, and therefore those particles must necessarily have very angular figures, which are unfit for motion; and thence it comes to pass, that such particles easily stick together, and transfer the greatest part of their motion upon those other particles which are less, and therefore have a swifter motion; and because these particles are to pass thorow such triangular space which lye in the midst of three Globular particles touching each other, therefore he supposeth them as to their breadth

and depth to be of a triangular figure; but because these particles are somewhat long, and the globular particles through which they pass with so swift motion have their rotation about the poles of the Heavens, thence he supposes that those triangular particles come to be wreathed. Now from these things being thus supposed, Des Cartes hath ingeniously and consonantly to his Principles undertaken to give an account of the most noted Phenomena of the world, and those three sorts of particles mentioned he makes to be his three elements; the first is that subtil matter which was supposed to arise from the cuttings off the angles of the greater particles; and of this he tells us the Sun and fixed Stars consist, as those particles of that subtil matter being in continual motion, have made those several virtoces or athereal whirlpools. The second element consists of the spherical particles themselves, which make up the Heavens. Out of the third element which are those wreathed particles, he gives an account of the formation of the Earth, and Planets, and Comets; and from all of them by the help of those common affections of matter, size, figure, motion, &c. he undertakes to give an account of the Phenomena of the world. How far his principles do conduce to the giving mens minds satisfaction, as to the particular Phenomena of nature, is not here our business to enquire, but only how far these principles can give an account of the Origine of the Universe without a Deity? And that it cannot give a satisfactory account how the world was framed without a Deity, appears by the two grand suppositions on which all his elements depend, both which cannot be from any other principle but God. Those are, 1. The existence of matter in the world which we have already proved cannot be independent on God, and necessarily existent; and therefore supposing that matter existent, and put into motion, would grind its self into those several particles by him supposed; yet this cannot give any account of the Origine of the Universe without a Deity. 2. The motion of the particles of matter suppose a Deity; for matter is no self-moving principle, as hath been fully demonstrated in several places by that judicious Philosopher Dr. H. More, who plainly manifests that if motion did necessarily belong to matter, it were impossible there

Antidote.

b. 2. ch. 1.

Immorta-

lity of the

soul, b. 1. c.

11. f. 3. &c.

Ep. 3. ad

Cartes p. 98

there should be *Sun*, or *Stars*, or *Earth*, or *Man* in the world; for the matter being *uniform*, it must have equal motion in all its particles, if motion doth belong to it. For motion being supposed to be *natural* and *essential* to matter, must be *alike* every where in it, and therefore every particle must be supposed in motion to its utmost capacity, and so every particle is alike, and moved alike: and therefore there being no prevalency at all in any one particle above another in *bigness* or *motion*, it is manifest that this *universal* matter, to whom motion is so *essential* and *natural*; will be *ineffectual* for the producing of any variety of appearances in nature; for nothing could be caused by this *thin* and *subtil* matter, but what would be wholly *imperceptible* to any of our senses: and what a strange kind of *visible* world would this be? From hence then it appears that there must be an infinitely powerful and wise God, who must both put matter into motion, and regulate the motion of it, in order to the producing all those varieties which appear in the world. And this necessity of the motion of matter by a power given it from God is freely acknowledged by Mr. Des Cartes himself in these words; *Considero materiam sibi libere permissam, & nullum aliunde impulsus suscipientem, & plane quiescentem; illa 3. H. Mori. autem impellitur à Deo tantundem motus sive translationis in p. 104. ea conservante quantum ab initio posuit.* So that this great improver and discoverer of the *Mechanical* power of matter, doth freely confess the necessity not only of Gods giving motion in order to the *Origine* of the *Universe*, but of his conserving motion in it for the upholding it: So that we need not fear from this Hypothesis the excluding of a *Deity* from being the prime efficient cause of the world. All the question then is concerning the particular manner, which was used by God as the efficient cause in giving Being to the world. As to which I shall only in general suggest what *Maimonides* says of it. *Omnia simul creata erant, & postea successive ab invicem separata*; Although I am somewhat inclinable to that of *Gassendus*, *majus est mundus opus, quam ut assequi mens humana illius molitionem possit*: To which I think may be well applied that speech of *Solomon*; *Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under* Eccl. 8. 17.

the Sun; because, though a man labour to seek it out, yet farther, though a wise man seek to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it.

CHAP. III.

Of the Origine of Evil.

Of the Being of Providence. Epicurus his arguments against it refuted. The necessity of the belief of Providence in order to Religion. Providence proved from a consideration of the nature of God, and the things of the world. Of the Spirit of nature. The great objections against Providence propounded. The first concerns the Origine of Evil. God cannot be the author of sin, if the Scriptures be true. The account which the Scriptures give of the fall of man, doth not charge God with mans faults. Gods power to govern man by Laws, though he gives no particular reason of every Positive Precept. The reason of Gods creating man with freedom of will, largely shewed from Simplicius; and the true account of the Origine of evil. Gods permitting the fall, makes him not the author of it. The account which the Scriptures give of the Origine of evil, compared with that of Heathen Philosophers. The antiquity of the opinion of ascribing the Origine of evil to an evil principle. Of the judgment of the Persians, Egyptians, and others about it. Of Manichæism. The opinion of the ancient Greek Philosophers; of Pythagoras, Plato, the Stoicks; the Origine of evil not from the necessity of matter. The remainders of the history of the fall among the Heathens. Of the malignity of Demons. Providence vindicated as to the sufferings of the good, and impunity of bad men. An account of both from natural light, manifested by Seneca, Plutarch, and others.

S. I.

IT being now manifest not only that there is a God, but that the world hath its Being from him; it thence follows by an easie and rational deduction, that there is a particular hand of Divine providence, which upholds the world in its Being, and wisely disposeth all events in it. For it is a most
irrational

irrational and absurd opinion to assert a *Deity*, and deny Providence : and in nothing did *Epicurus* more discover the weakness and puerility of his judgment than in this. Indeed, if *Epicurus* had no other design in asserting a *Deity*, than (as many ancient Philosophers imagined) to avoid the imputation of direct *Atheism* ; and yet to take away all foundations of Religion, he must needs be said to serve his Hypothesis well, though he did assert the Being of an excellent nature which he called *God* ; while yet he made him sit as it were with his elbows folded up in the Heavens, and taking no cognizance of humane actions. For he well knew, that if the belief of Divine providence were once rooted out of mens minds, the thoughts of an excellent Being above the Heavens, would have no more awe or power upon the hearts and lives of men, than the telling men that there are Jewels of inestimable value in the Indies, makes them more ready to pay taxes to their Princes. For that Philosopher could not be ignorant, that it is not worth but power, nor speculation but interest, that rules the world. The poor Tenant more regards his petty Landlord, than the greatest Prince in the world that hath nothing to do with him : and he thinks he hath great reason for it ; for he neither fears punishment, nor hopes for reward from him ; whereas his Landlord may dispossess him of all he hath upon displeasure, and may advantage him the most if he gains his favour : Supposing then that there were such an excellent Being in the world which was compleatly happy in himself, and thought it an impairing of his happiness to trouble himself with an inspection of the world ; Religion might then be indeed derived à *relegendo*, but not à *religando* ; there might be some pleasure in contemplating his nature, but there could be no obligation to obedience. So that *Epicurus* was the first founder of a kind of Philosophical Antinomianism, placing all Religion in a veneration of the *Deity* purely for its own excellency without any such mercenary eye (as those who serve God for their own ends, as they say, are apt to have) to reward and punishment. And I much doubt that good woman whom the story goes of, who in an Enthusiastick posture ran up and down the streets with emblems in her hands, fire in the one

as she said to *burn up Heaven*, and *water* in the other to *quench Hell*, that men might serve *God* purely for himself, would if she had compassed he design, soon brought *Profelytes* enough to *Epicurus*, and by *burning Heaven*, would have *burnt up* the *cords of Religion*, and in *quenching Hell*, would have *extinguished* the *awe and fear* of a *Deity* in the world. Indeed the incomparable excellency and perfection which is in the *Divine nature*, to *spirits* advanced to a noble and generous height in *Religion*, makes them exceedingly value their choice; while they *disregard* what ever rivals with *God* for it; but were it not for those *Magmetical hooks* of obedience, and eternal interest, there are few would be drawn to a due consideration of, much less a delight in, so amiable and excellent a nature. And it is impossible to conceive, why *God* in the revelation of his Will should ever so much as mention a future punishment, or promise an eternal reward, were not the consideration of these things the *finis* of *Religion*.

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Which they, whose design was to undermine the very foundations on which all *Religion* was built, understood far better than those weak pretended *advancers* of *Religion*, who while in such a way they pretend to advance it, do only blow it up. For if men ought not to have an eye and respect to their own future condition, nor serve *God* on the account of his power to make our souls miserable or happy, much less ought men to serve *God* with any regard to his *Providence*, since the matters which *Providence* is employed about in this world are of infinitely less moment, than those which concern our future state. And if we are to have no eye on *Divine Providence* in the exercise of *Religion*, we shall scarce be able to understand for what end *God* should take so much care of mankind, and manifest so much of his goodness to them, were it not to quicken them in their search after him, and excite them to the more cheerful obedience to him. And when once we question to what end *God* troubles himself with the world, we are come next door to *Epicurus*, and may in few steps more delight in the flowers of his Garden. For this was his strongest plea against *Providence*, that it was beneath the Majesty and excellency of the *Divine nature* to stoop so low and

and trouble himself so far, as to regard what was done on earth. This being one of his *Rata Sententia* or undoubted *Diag. Laer.* *Maxims*, *τιμωριος εστιν Αθανατος εν ανθρωποις ουκ εστιν ανθρωπος* l. 10. *The Blessed and Immortal Being*, neither hath any employment himself, nor troubles himself with others. Which as *Maximus Tyrim* well observes, is rather a description of a *Sardanapalmus* than a *Deity*; nay, of a worse than a *Sardanapalmus*: for, he in the midst of all his softness and effeminacy *Disfert. 29.* would yet entertain some counsels for the safety and good of his *Empire*; but, *Epicurus* his *Deity* is of so tender a nature, that the least thought of business would quite spoil his happiness. This opinion of *Epicurus* made the more raised-spirited *Moralists* so far condemn the unworthy apprehensions which he entertained of the *Divine Nature*, that they degraded him from the very title of a *Philosopher* in it, and ranked him beneath the most fabulous Poets, who had writ such unworthy things of their Gods, as is evident by the censures which *Tully*, *Plutarch*, and others pass upon him for this very opinion. And they tell him that some of their own men were of a more noble and excellent spirit than *Epicurus* his *Deity*, who abhorred softness and idleness, and made it their greatest delight to do good to their Countreys. But, *Epicurus* must needs make his God of his own humour (the usual flattery which men bear to themselves, to think that most excellent which they delight in most) as *Xenophanes* was wont to say of his horse, If he were to describe a God, it would be with a curled main, a broad chest, &c. and in every thing like himself. Had *Epicurus* himself so little of an *Athenian* in him, as not to make it some part of his delights to understand the affairs of the world? or, at least did he take no pleasure in the walks of his famous Garden, nor to order his trees, and set his flowers, and contrive every thing for his own delight? Would *Epicurus* then count this a part of his happiness? and is it inconsistent with the happiness of the *Deity*, to take notice of the world and order all things in it for his own glory? Must so excellent a nature as Gods was, by his own acknowledgement, be presently sired with business, when the more excellent any nature is, the more active and vigorous it is, the more able to comprehend and dispatch

Tull. de Finib. l. 1. De nat. Deor. l. 2. Plutarch advers. Colat.

matters of moment with the least disturbance to its self? Is it pleasure to a Nurse to fill the child with her milk? doth the Sun rejoyce to help the world with his constant light? and doth a Fountain murmur, till it be delivered of its Streams which may refresh the ground? and is it no delight to the Divine Nature to behold the effects of his goodness upon the world? We see here then the foundation on which Epicurus went, viz. that his God must be like himself, or there must be none; and truly he might more suitably to his principles question his existence, then supposing his existence deny his Providence on such miserable accounts as these are, which yet are the chief which either Epicurus or Lucretius could bring against it, from the consideration of the Divine Nature.

§. 3.

The which to any one who considers it, doth necessarily infer a peculiar eye and hand of Providence in the World. For can we imagine that a Being of Infinite knowledge should be ignorant of what is done in the world? and of Infinite power should stand by and leave things to chance and fortune? which were at first, contrived and brought into Being by the contrivance of his Wisdom, and exercise of his Power. And where the foundation of existence lyes wholly and solely in the power of an Infinite Being producing, the ground of continuance of that existence must lye in the same power conserving. When men indeed effect any thing, the work may continue, whatever becomes of him that did it; but the reason of that is, because what man doth, is out of matter already existent, and his work is only setting materials together; but now what God effects he absolutely gives a Being to, and therefore its duration depends on his conservation. What is once in its Being, I grant, will continue till some greater force then its self put it out of Being; but withall I add, that Gods withdrawing his Conservation is so great a force, as must needs put that Being which had its existence from his power, out of the condition it was in by it. The Light of the Sun continues in the ay, and as long as the Sun communicates it, nothing can extinguish the light, but what will put out the Sun; but could we suppose the Sun to withdraw his beams, what becomes of the light then?

This

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This is the case of all *Beings*, which come from an *Infinite power*; their *subsistence* depends on a continual emanation of the same power which gave them *Being*; and when once this is withdrawn, all those *Beings* which were produced by this power must needs relapse into nothing. Besides, what dependance is there upon each other in the moments of the duration of any created *Being*? The mode of existence in a creature is but contingent and possible, and nothing is implied in the notion of an existent creature, beyond meer possibility of existence; what is it then which gives actual existence to it? that cannot be its self, for it would be necessarily existent; if another then give existence, this existence must wholly depend upon him who gave it; for nothing can continue existence to its self, but what may give it to its self, (for it gives it for the moment it continues it) and what gives existence to its self, must necessarily exist, which is repugnant to the very notion of a created *Being*: So that either we must deny a possibility of non-existence, or annihilation in a creature, which follows upon necessity of existence, or else we must assert that the duration or continuance of a creature in its *Being* doth immediately depend on Divine providence and Conservation, which is with as much reason as frequency said to be a continued Creation. But yet further; Was an infinite Wisdom, and Power necessary to put things into that order they are in? and is not the same necessary for the Governing of them? I cannot see any reason to think that the power of matter when set in motion, should either bring things into that exquisite order and dependance which the parts of the world have upon each other; much less that by the meer force of that first motion all things should continue in the state they are in. Perpetual motion is yet one of the desiderata of the World; the most exquisite Mechanism cannot put an engine beyond the necessity of being looked after; can we then think this dull, unactive matter, meerly by the force of its first motion should be able still to produce the effects which are seen in the World, and to keep it from tumbling, at least by degrees, into its pristine Chaos? It was an infinite Power, I grant, which gave that first motion; but that it gave power to continue that motion till the Con-

gration of the world, remains yet to be proved. Some therefore finding that in the present state of the World, matter will not serve for all the noted and common Phenomena of the world, have called in the help of a Spirit of Nature, which may serve instead of a Man-midwife to Matter, to help her in her productions of things. Or, as though God had a Plurality of worlds to look after, they have taken care to substitute him a Vicar in this, which is this Spirit of Nature. But we had rather believe God himself to be perpetually Resident in the World, and that the power which gives life, and being, and motion to every thing in the world, is nothing else but his own Providence; especially since we have learnt from himself, that it is in him we live, and move, and have our being.

A. 17. 28.

§. 4.

Thus then we see a necessity of asserting Divine Providence, whether we consider the Divine nature, or the Phenomena of the world; but yet the case is not so clear but there are two grand objections behind, which have been the continual exercise of the wits of inquisitive men almost in all Ages of the World. The one concerns the first Origin of evil; the other concerns the dispensations of Providence, whence it comes to pass that good men fare so hard in the World, when the bad triumph and flourish; if these two can be cleared with any satisfaction to reason, it will be the highest vindication of Divine Providence, and a great evidence of the Divinity of the Scriptures, which gives us such clear light and direction in these profound Speculations, which the dim reason of man was so much to seek in.

I begin with the Origin of evil; For, If there be a hand of Providence which orders all things in the world, how comes evil then into it, without Gods being the Author of it? Which is a Speculation of as great depth as necessity; it highly concerning us to entertain the highest apprehensions of Gods bounties, and how far he is from being the author of sin; and it is likewise a matter of some difficulty so to explain the Origin of evil as to make it appear that God is not the author of it. I easily then assent to what Origen saith on this Subject, when Celsus upon some mistaken places of Scripture had charged the Scripture with laying the Origin of evil

Orig. c.
Cels. l. 4:
p. 207.

evil upon God; ἐπεὶ ἑαλλήεναι τὸν Θεὸν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἐξαιτίας
 αὐτοῦ διὰ τὴν ἐκείνου ἐκ τῆ φύσεως ἡμῶν, - ἐν τοίοις καὶ ἡ τῶν
 πρὸς ταῦτα ἀν' ἡμῶν. If anything which calls for our en-
 quiry be of difficult investigation, that which concerns the O-
 rigin of evils is such a thing; and as Simplicius well be-
 gins his discourse on this subject; καὶ τῆς ὑποστάσεως τοῦ κακῶν ὁ
 λόγος μὴ καλῶς διορθῶνται; καὶ οὐκ ἐπὶ τὸ θᾶν ἀσθενεῖς ἀπὸ
 λόγου, καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἡθῶν ἐναγωγίας τῆς ἀρχῆς διττάδεξι; καὶ πολλὰς c. 34.
 καὶ ἀλύτοις ἀμειλίαις ἐκείνου τοῦ μὴ καλῶς ἀπολογεῖσθαι αὐτῷ.
 The Dispute concerning the nature and Origin of evil, not be-
 ing well stated, is the cause of great impiety towards God;
 and perverts the principles of good life, and involves them in
 innumerable perplexities, who are not able to give a rational ac-
 count of it. So much then is it our great concernment to fix
 on sure grounds in the resolution of this important Question,
 in which I intend not to lanch out into the depth and intricacy
 of it, as it relates to any internal purposes of Gods will,
 (which is beyond our present scope) but I shall only take
 that account of it which the Scripture plainly gives in re-
 lating the fall of the first man. For the clearing of which,
 I shall proceed in this method:

1. That if the Scriptures be true, God cannot be the author of sin.
2. That the account which the Scripture gives of the Origin of evil, doth not charge it upon God.
3. That no account given by Philosophers of the Origin of evil, is so clear and rational as this is.
4. That the most material circumstances of this account are asserted by the Heathens themselves.

1. That if the Scriptures be true, God cannot be the author of sin. For if the Scriptures be true, we are bound without hesitation to yield our assent to them in their plain and direct affirmations, and there can be no ground of suspending assent, as to any thing which pretends to be a Divine Truth, but the want of certain evidence, whether it be of Divine Revelation or no. No doubt, it would be one of the most effectual ways to put an end to the numerous controversies of the Christian world (especially to those bold disputes concerning the method and order of Gods decrees) if the plain

and undoubted assertions of Scripture were made the Rule and Standard, whereby we ought to judge of such things as are more obscure and ambiguous. And could men but rest contented with those things which concern their eternal happiness, and the means in order to it (which on that account are written with all imaginable perspicuity in Scripture) and the moment of all other controversies be judged by their reference to these, there would be fewer controversies and more Christians in the World. Now there are two grand principles which concern mens eternal condition, of which we have the greatest certainty from Scripture, and on which we may with safety rely, without perplexing our minds about those more nice and subtle Speculations (which it may be are incapable of full and particular resolution) and those are, *That the ruine and destruction of man is wholly from himself; and that his salvation is from God alone.* If then mans ruine and misery be from himself, which the Scripture doth so much inculcate on all occasions, then without controversy that which is the cause of all the misery of humane nature, is wholly from himself too, which is, *sin.* So that if the main scope and design of the Scripture be true, God cannot be the author of that, by which (without the intervention of the mercy of God) mans misery unavoidably falls upon him. For with what authority and Majesty doth God in the Scripture forbid all manner of sin? with what earnestness and importunity doth he woo the sinner to forsake his sin? with what loathing and detestation doth he mention sin? with what justice and severity doth he punish sin? with what wrath and indignation doth he threaten contumacious sinners? And is it possible, (after all this and much more, recorded in the Scriptures, to express the holiness of Gods nature, his hatred of sin, and his appointing a day of judgement for the solemn punishment of sinners,) to imagine that the Scriptures do in the least ascribe the Origin of evil to God, or make him the Author of Sin? Shall not the Judge of all the world do right? Will a God of Infinite Justice, Purity, and Holiness, punish the sinner for that which himself was the cause of? Far be such unworthy thoughts from our apprehensions of a Deity, much more of that God whom we believe

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to have declared his mind so much to the contrary, that we cannot believe that and the Scriptures to be true together.

Taking it then for granted in the general, that God cannot be the author of sin, we come to enquire, whether the account which the Scripture gives of the Origin of evil, doth any way charge it upon God? There are only two ways, which according to the history of the fall of man recorded in Scripture, whereby men may have any ground to question whether God were the cause of mans fall? either first, by the giving him that positive Law, which was the occasion of his fall; or secondly, by leaving him to the liberty of his own will. First, The giving of that positive Law cannot be the least ground of laying mans fault on God; because, 1. It was most suitable to the nature of a rational creature to be governed by Laws, or declarations of the Will of his Maker; For considering man as a free agent, there can be no way imagined so consonant to the nature of man as this was, because thereby he might declare his obedience to God to be the matter of his free choice. For where there is a capacity of reward, and punishment, and acting in the consideration of them, there must be a declaration of the will of the Law-giver, according to which man may expect either his reward or punishment. If it were suitable to Gods nature to promise life to man upon obedience, it was not unsuitable to it to expect obedience to every declaration of his will; considering the absolute Sovereignty and Dominion which God had over man as being his creature; and the indispensable obligation which was in the nature of man to obey whatever his Maker did command him. So that God had full and absolute right to require from man, what he did as to the Law which he gave him to obey: and in the general we cannot conceive, how there should be a testimony of mans obedience towards his Creator, without some declaration of his Creators Will. Secondly, God had full power and authority, not only to govern man by laws, but to determine mans general obligation to obedience to that particular positive precept by the breach of which man fell. If Gods power over man was universal and unlimited, what reason can there be to imagine it should not extend to such

such a positive Law? Was it, because the matter of this Law seemed too low for God to command his creature? but, whatever the matter of the Law was, obedience to God was the great end of it, which man had testified as much in that Instance of it as in any other whatsoever; and in the violation of it were implied the highest aggravations of disobedience; for Gods power and authority was as much contemned, his goodnesse slighted, his Truth and faithfulness questioned, his Name dishonoured, his Majesty affronted in the breach of that as of any other Law whatsoever it had been. If the Law were easie to be observed, the greater was the sin of disobedience; if the weight of the matter was not so great in its self, yet Gods authority added the greatest weight to it; and the ground of obedience is not to be fetched from the nature of the thing required, but from the authority of the Legislator. Or, was it then because God concealed from man his counsel in giving of that positive precept? Hath not then a Legislator power to require any thing, but what he satisfies every one of his reason in commanding it? if so, what becomes of obedience and subjection? It will be impossible to make any probative precepts on this account; and the Legislator must be charged with the disobedience of his subjects, where he doth not give a particular account of every thing which he requires; which as it concerns humane Legislators (who have not that absolute power and authority which God hath) is contrary to all Laws of Policy, and the general sense of the world. This Plutarch gives a good account of, when he discourseth so rationally of the sobriety which men ought to use in their inquiries into the grounds and reasons of Gods actions; for, saith he, Physicians will give prescriptions without giving the patient a particular reason of every circumstance in them: ἡδὲ καὶ ἰατροὶ νόμους τίθενται τὸ νόσην ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔχειν καὶ ταῦτα παρὰ νόμον, οὐκ ὅτι καὶ δουλοκρατεῖν ἡλπίουσι νοσημάτων. Neither have humane Laws alwayes apparent reason for them, nay, some of them are so appearance ridiculous; for which he instanceth in that Law of the Lacedemonian Ephori καὶ τῶν ἐπιμύσεων, to which no other reason was annexed but this, ὅτι οὐδὲ τις νόμος οὐ καὶ χαλεπὸν ὄνει ἀντι: they commanded every Magistrate at the entrance of his office

De his qui
fero puni-
untur a
numine.

to save himself, and gave this reason for it, that they might learn to obey Laws themselves. He further instanceth, in the Roman custom of manumission, their Laws about testaments, Solons Law against neutrality in seditions, and concludes thence ὅτι ὁλοὺς πολλὰς αὖ τὴν ἐξέτασιν τῶν αἰτιῶν, μήτε ἑ λῶγος ἔχει εὖ νομοδότης, μήτε τῶν αἰτίας συνειδὼς ἐκείνῳ χαρισθεῖσιν. Any one would easily find many absurdities in Laws, who doth not consider the intension of the Legislator, or the ground of what he requires. Τι δὲ θαυμάσιον, saith he, ὡς ἂν ἀνθρώπων ἔστιν ἡμῶν οὐκ ἀνθρώπων, ἢ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώπων ἐστὶ τὸ πᾶν τὸ δίκαιον αἰτιῶν, ὃ πρὸς λόγῳ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, τοῦ ὅτι ὁ νόμος τὸ ἀμαρτανόσιον κολάζουσιν. What wonder is it, if we are so puzzled to give an account of the actions of men, that we should be to seek as to those of the Deity? This cannot be then any ground on the account of meer reason, to lay the charge of mans disobedience upon God, because he required from him the observance of that positive command of not eating of the forbidden fruit.

The only thing then left is, Whether God be not lyable to this charge as he left man to the liberty of his Will: And that may be grounded on two things, either that God did not create man in such a condition, in which it had been impossible for him to have sinned, or that knowing his temptation he did not give him power to resist it. If neither of these will lay any Imputation of the Origine of evil upon God, then God will appear to be wholly free from it. First, concerning mans being created a free agent; if the determination of the Schools be good, that possibility of sinning is implied in the very notion of a creature, and consequently that impeccability is repugnant to the nature of a created Being; then we see a necessary reason, why man was created in a state of liberty, but endeavouring to shew that the grounds of our Religion are not repugnant to natural reason, I shall rather make use of the Testimony of such who professed to be followers of nothing else but reason and Philosophy. Among whom I shall make choice of Simplicius both for the reason he produceth, and because he is farthest from any suspicion of partiality, by reason of his known opposition to the Mosaisk history of the Creation. He then in his Commentaries on Epictetus professedly disputes this very subject of the Origine

§. 6.

Vid. Thom.

1. p. q. 63.

art. 1.

Estium in

sententia 2.

dist. 7.

Sect. 9.

Com. in

Epict. cap.

34. p. 175.

of evil, and after having rejected that fond opinion of *two principles*, one of good, and the other of evil, undertakes to give an account whence evil came into the world, which because it tends so much to the illustrating our present subject, I shall give an account of. God, saith he, who is the fountain and principle of all Good, not only produced things which were in themselves good, nor only those things which were of a middle nature, but the extremes too, which were such things which were apt to be perverted from that which is according to nature, to that which we call evil. And thus after those bodies which were (as he supposeth) incorruptible, others were produced which are subject to mutation and corruption, and so after those souls which were immutably fixed in good, others were produced which were lyable to be perverted from it; that so the riches of Gods goodness might be displayed in making to exist all beings which were capable of it; and that the Universe might be perfect in having all sorts of Beings in it. Now, he suppoeth, that all those Beings which are above this sublunary world are such as are immutably good, and that the lowest sort of Beings which are lyable to be perverted to evil, are such which are here below. Therefore, saith he, the Soul being of a more noble and immutable nature, while it is by itself, doth not partake of evil; but it being of a nature apt to be joyned with these terrestrial bodies (by the providence of the author of the Universe who produced such souls, that so both extremes might be joyned by the bonds of vital union) thereby it becomes sensible of those evils and pains which the body is subject to; but these things are not properly evils but rather good, considering our terrestrial bodies as parts of the Universe which is upheld by the changes and vicissitudes which are in this lower world; Which he largely discourseth on, to shew that those particular alterations which are in bodies, do conduce rather to the perfection and beauty of the Universe, then are any real evils in it. But now, saith he, for the origine of those things which are properly evils, viz. moral evils, which are καὶ ἀσθενεῖς τοῦ καὶ ἁμαρταν the lapses and errors of the humane Soul, we are to consider, that there are souls of a more excellent nature then ours are, which are immutably good; and the souls of brutes are of a lower kind then

God and the Laws, and all good men, do not measure the good and evil of actions so much by the event, as by the will and intention of the person; and that punishment and reward have chiefly a respect to these. And therefore men are pardoned for what they do out of constraints and force, and the fault is ascribed, *ὁ δὲ πονηρὸς ἄνθρωπος βιάσθη*, not to him that did it, but to him that forced him to the doing of it. And so from hence he concludes, that because of the freedom of the will of man, nothing else can be said to be the author of evil properly, but the soul of man; and concludes that discourse with this excellent speech, *Ἐπεὶ οὖν τὸ κακὸν τῷ ἄνθρωπῳ, λαμβανόμενον τῷ πονηρῷ, ὃν ὁ Θεὸς ἐκείνῳ ἀνέστη, ὁ δὲ τὸ κακὸν ἢ τοῦ κακῶς ἀνθρώπου, ἢ οὐκ ὁ Θεός· ἵνα ὁ Θεὸς ἢ ὁ κακὸν ἐκείνῳ ἢ τοῦ κακῶς ἀνθρώπου ἢ ὁ Θεὸς ἡνίκα οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνέστη· ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐκείνῳ βιάσθη, καὶ οὐκ ὁ Θεὸς τὸ κακὸν ἢν τὸ βίᾳ ἐκείνῳ ἀνέστη. καὶ ὁ κακὸν ἀνέστη, ἀπὸ τῆς αἰτίας ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.* Having thus found out the true Origine of evil, let us cry out with a loud voice, that God is not the author of sin, because the soul freely doth that which is evil, and not God; for if the soul were forced to do what it doth, one might justly lay the blame on God, who permits such a force to be offered it; neither could it be properly evil which the soul was constrained to, but since it acted freely, and out of choice, the soul must alone be accounted the author and cause of evil. Thus we see that God cannot with any shadow of reason be accounted the author of evil, because he gave the soul of man a principle of internal freedom, when the very freedom of acting which the soul had, put it into a capacity of standing as well as falling. And certainly, he can never be said to be the cause of the breaking of a person, who gave him a stock to set up with, and supposed him able to manage it when he gave it him. Indeed had not man had this freedom of will, he could not have fallen; but then neither had he been a rational Agents, which, supposing no corruption, doth speak freedom of action. So that while we enquire after the Origine of evil we have no other cause to assign it to, but mans abuse of that free power of acting which he had; but if we will be so curious as to enquire further, why God did create man with such a freedom of will, and not rather fix his soul immutably on good;

if the order of things be no satisfactory reason for it, we can give no other then that why he made man, or the world at all, which was the good pleasure of his Will.

But secondly, *Supposing Gods giving man this freedom of will, doth not entitle him to be the author of evil; doth not his leaving man to this liberty of his in the temptation, make him the cause of sin?* I answer, no, and that on these accounts. §. 7.

1. *Because man stood then upon such terms, that he could not fall but by his own free and voluntary act; he had a power to stand, in that there was no principle of corruption at all in his faculties, but he had a pure and undefiled soul which could not be polluted without its own consent: Now it had been repugnant to the terms on which man stood (which were the tryal of his obedience to his Creator) had he been irresistibly determined any way. Simplicius puts this question after the former discourse, Whether God may not be called the author of sin, because he permits the soul to use her liberty? but, saith he, he that says God should not have permitted this use of its freedom to the soul, must say one of these two things, Either that the soul being of such a nature as is indifferent to good or evil, it should have been wholly kept from the choosing evil, or else that it should have been made of such a nature that it should not have had a power of choosing evil. The first is irrational and absurd, for what freedom and liberty had that been where there was no choice, and what choice could there have been where the mind was necessitated only to one part. For the second we are to consider, saith he, that no evil is in its self desirable, or to be chosen; but withall, if this power of determining its self either way must be taken away, it must be either as something not good, or as some great evil; and whoever saith so, doth not consider, how many things in the world there are, which are accounted good and desirable things, yet are no wayes comparable with this freedom of Will. For it excells all sublunary Beings; and there is none would rather desire to be a Brute or Plant then Man; if God then shewed his goodnesse in giving to inferior Beings such perfections which are far below this, is it any wayes incongruous to Gods nature and goodnesse to give man the freedom of his actions, and a self determining*

power, though he permitted him the free use of it. Besides, as that author reasons, had God, to prevent mans sin, taken away the Liberty of his will, he had likewise destroyed the foundation of all virtue, and the very nature of man; for virtue would not have been such, had there been no possibility of acting contrary; and mans nature would have been divine, because impeccable. Therefore, saith he, though we attribute this self-determining power to God as the author of it, which was so necessary in the order of the Universe, we have no reason to attribute the Origine of that evil to God which comes by the abuse of that liberty. For, as he further adds, God dath not at all cause that aversion from Good, which is in the soul when it sins, but only gave such a power to the soul, whereby it might turn its self to evil, out of which God might afterwards produce so much good, which could not otherwise have been without it. So consonantly to the Scripture doth that Philosopher speak on this subject.

Pag. 186,
187.

2. God cannot be said to be the author of sin, though he did not prevent the fall of man, because he did not withdraw before his fall any grace or assistance, which was necessary for his standing. Had there been indeed a necessity of supernatural grace to be communicated to man for every moment to continue him in his Innocency, and had God before mans fall withdrawn such assistance from him, without which it were impossible for him to have stood, it would be very difficult freeing God from being the cause of the Fall of man. But we are not put to such difficulties for acquitting God from being the author of sin; for there appears no necessity at all for asserting any distinction of sufficient and efficacious grace in man before his Fall; that the one should belong only to a radical power of standing, the other to every act of good which Adam did; For if God made man upright, he certainly gave him such a power as might be brought into act without the necessity of any supervenient act of grace, to elicit that habitual power into particular actions. If the other were sufficient, it was sufficient for its end; and how could it be sufficient for its end, if, notwithstanding that, there were no possibility of standing, unless efficacious help were superadded to it? God would not certainly require any thing

thing from the creature in his integrity, but what he had a power to obey; and if there were necessary further grace to bring the power into act, then the subtracting of this grace must be by way of punishment to man, which it is hard to conceive for what it should be, before man had sinned; or else God must subtract this grace on purpose that man might fall, which would necessarily follow on this supposition, in which case Man would be necessitated to fall, *veluti cum subductis columnis domus necessario corrui*, as one expresseth it, as a house must needs fall when the pillars on which it stood are taken away from it. But now if God withdrew not any effectual grace from man, whereby he must necessarily fall, then though God permit man to use his liberty, yet he cannot be said to be any ways the author of evil, because man had still a *posse si vellet*, a power of standing, if he had made right use of his Liberty, and God never took from man his *adjutorium quo potuit stare, & sine quo non potuit*, as Divines call it, man enjoying still his power, though by the abuse of his Liberty he fell into sin; so that granting God to leave man to the use of his Liberty, yet we see God cannot in the least be charged with being the Author of sin, or of the Origin of evil, by the History of the fall of man in Scripture: which was the thing to be cleared.

We come now in the third place to compare that account given of the Origin of evil in Scripture, with that which was embraced by Heathen Philosophers, in point of reason and evidence. There was no one Inquiry whatsoever in which those who had nothing but natural light to guide them, were more to seek for satisfaction in, than this concerning the Origin of evil. They saw by continual experience how great a Torrent of both sorts of evils, of sin and punishment, did overflow the world; but they were like the Egyptians, who had sufficient evidence of the overflowing their banks by the River Nile, but could not find out the spring or the head of it. The reason was, as corruption increased in the world, so the means of instruction and knowledge decayed; and so as the Phenomena grew greater, the reason of them was less understood; the knowledge of the History of the first Ages of the world, through which they could

could alone come to the full understanding of the true cause of evil, insensibly decaying in the several Nations : Inasmuch that those who were not at all acquainted with that History of the world which was preserved in *Sacred Records* among the *Jews*, had nothing but their own uncertain conjectures to go by, and some kind of obscure traditions which were preserved among them, which while they sought to rectify by their interpretations, they made them more *obscure* and *false* than they found them. They were certain of nothing but that mankind was in a low and degenerate condition, and subject to continual miseries and calamities, they who cried up the most the *αὐτοκρίνον*, or the *self-determining power* of the *soul*, could not certainly but strangely wonder, that a *Principle* indifferent to be carried either way, should be so almost *fatally* inclined to the worst of them. It was very strange that since *Reason* ought to have the command of *Passions* by their own acknowledgement, the *brutish* part of the soul should so master and enslave the *rational*, and the *beast* should still cast the rider in man, the *sensitive appetite* should throw off the power of the *τοῦ ἡγεμονικῶν* of that *faculty* of the soul which was designed for the *Governments* of all the rest. The *Philosophers* could not be ignorant what *slaves* they were themselves to this *terrestrial Hyle*, how easily their most *mettlesome* souls were *wired* in the dirt, how deep they were *sunk* into corporeal pleasures, that it was past the power of their reason to help them out. Nay when the soul begins to be *sledged* again, after *ἀπερρίπνους*, or *moulting* at her entrance into the body, which *Plato* speaks of, and strives to raise her self above this lower world, she then feels the *weight* of such *Plummetts* hanging at her feet, that they bring her down again to her former *fluttering* up and down in her *Cage* of earth. So *Hierocles* complains, that when *reason* begins to carry the soul to the perception of the most noble objects, the soul with a *generous* flight would soar above this world, *ὅταν μὲν ἡ παθητικὴ ἀλλὰ δὲ ἰσχυρὴ καὶ μαλ' ὀρεῖται, ἀπορρίπνεται καὶ κατὰ χάριν*, were it not born down to that which is evil by the force of passions, which hang like leads upon the souls feet. What a strange unaccountable thing must this needs be to those who beheld the constancy of

of the effect, but were to seek for the cause of it? it could not but be clear to them that the *αυτηξίον* they were wont to exalt so high, was (in the state man was now in) but a more noble name for slavery; when themselves could not but confess the *πόνη* or inclination in the soul, was so strong to the evil; and could that be an *even balance*, where there was so much *down-weights* in one of the *scales*; unless they made, as some of them did, the *voluntary inclinations* of the soul to evil, an evidence of her *liberty* in this most degenerate condition, as though it were any argument that the *prisoner* was the *freer*, because he delighted himself in the noise of his *shackles*. Neither was this disorder alone at home in the soul, where there was still a *Xantippe* scolding with *Socrates*, *passion* striving with *reason*; but when they looked abroad in the World, they could not but observe some strange irregularities in the *Converse* among men. What *debaucheries*, *contentions*, *rapines*, *fightings*, and *destroying* each other, and that with the greatest cruelty, and that frequently among *Country-men*, *Friends*, nay, *Relations*, and *kindreds*! and could this *hostility* between those of the same nature, and under the most sacred *bonds of union*, be the *result of nature*, when even *beasts of prey* are not such to those of their own kind? Besides all this when they summed up the life of *man* together, and took an account of the *weaknesses* and *follies* of *Childhood*, the *heats* and *extragancies* of *youth*, the *passions*, *disquietments*, and *disappointments*, of men in their strength and height of business, the *iniquitude*, *aches*, and *infirmities* of old age, besides the *miseries* which through every one of these all men are subject to, and few escape, into how small a *sum* will the solid *pleasure* and *contentment* of the life of *man* be reduced? Nay, if we take those things in the world which men please themselves the most in enjoyment of, and consider but with what *care* they are got, with what *fear* they are kept, and with what *certainly* they must be lost, and how much the *possession* of any thing fails of the *expectation* of it, and how near men are upon the top of *Tenariff* to fall into the *depth of the Sea*, how often they are precipitated from the height of *prosperity* into the *depth of adversity*, we shall find yet much less

that by the greatest *Chymistry* can be extracted of *real satisfaction* out of these things. Whence then should it come that mens *souls* should so delight to feed on these *husks* and to embrace these *clouds* and *shadows* instead of that *real good* which is the true object of the souls desire? They could easily see there was no *pure, unmixed good* in the World, but there was a *contemperation* of both together according to that of *Euripides*:

Οὐκ ἂν ᾔνοιτο χαρὲς ἰσθλὰ καὶ πᾶν,
 Ἀλλ' ἐστὶ τις εὐνυγμοῖς.

Plat. in
 Phæd.

There is a kind of continual mixture of good and evil in the world, which *Socrates* observed upon the rubbing of his thigh where the fetters made it itch, *ὡς ἄπορον, ὡς ἄνδρες, καὶ πᾶν ἔστι τοῦτο ὃ καλεῖται ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἡδὺ; ὡς δαυμαστος πόνος πρὸς τὸ δοῦν ἰναντιοῦνται, τὸ λυπεῖν.* What a strange thing is that which men are wont to call Pleasure; how near of kin is it to that which seems so contrary to it, Pain?

§. 9.

Now the observing the strange and sudden vicissitudes of these things, and what near neighbours pain and pleasure were to each other, (so that there is frequently a passage out of one into the other) did yet more entangle them to give a clear account of the *Origine* of both these. Those who believed there was a *God*, who produced the world and ordered all things in it, did easily attribute whatever was good in the world to the *Fountain* of all goodnesse; but, that any evil should come from him, they thought it repugnant to the very notion of a *Deity*; which they were so far right in, as it concerned the *evil* of *sin*, which we have already shewed *God* could not be the author of; but therein they shewed their ignorance of the true cause of evil, that they did not look upon the miseries of life as effects of *Gods Justice* upon the world for the *evil* of *sin*. And therefore that they might set the *Origine* of evil far enough off from *God*, they made two different *Principles* of things, the one of good, and the other of evil; this *Plutarch* tells us was the most ancient and universal account which he could meet with of the *origine* of good and evil. To which purpose we have this ample

Tesi.

Testimony of his in his learned Discourse, *de Iside & Osiride*,

Διὰ τὴν παλαιότητα αὐτῆς ἐκτετατὴ ἐν πολλοῖς καὶ νομοθετῶν, οἷς τὴν Plutarch.
 πρῶτον καὶ φιλοσοφίας διέτα, πᾶσι ἀρχὴν ἐν ἀσπίδι ἔχουσα, πᾶσι δὲ de Isid. &
 ἀνθρώποις καὶ θεοῖς ἀλλοτρίαν, ἢ ἐν λόγοις μόνον, ἢ ἐν ὁμίαις, Osir. p. 391.
 ἀλλὰ ἐν τῇ πελάγει ἐν τῇ θυρίδι, καὶ βαρβαρίαις καὶ Ἑλλήσι πολ- ed. Fr.

λαχὺ σφραγισμένην, οἷς ἔτ' ἀνεν καὶ ἀλογον καὶ ἀκρίβειον αἰσθε-
 τῶν πρὸ αὐτομάτω τὸ πᾶν, ἔτι εἰς ὅτι ὁ κρατὺν καὶ κατὰδύνατον,
 ὥστε εὐαξίη ἢ ποσὶν οἰκιστῶν χαλινῶς λέγει· ἀλλὰ πολλὰ καὶ μι-
 κροῖς ἐκδοῖς καὶ ἀγαθοῖς : μάλλον δὲ μὴδὲν ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ εἰπεῖν,
 ἀλλὰ ἐκ τῆς φύσεως φέρειν. ἢ δὲ πᾶσι πᾶσι εἰς ταμίαν
 ἡμῶν εὐαξίη τὰ πράγματα κατὰ τοὺς ἀνθρώπων ἀνακρίβειαν
 ἡμῶν, ἀλλὰ ὅτι δὲ ἐν αὐτῶν ἀρχῶν, καὶ δὲ ἐν αὐτῶν ἀντιπάλων δυνάμεων
 τῆς αὐτῆς ἐν τῇ διέξει καὶ ἐν τῇ ἐνδύει ἀσπίδι, τῆς δὲ ἐμπληρῶς
 ἀσπίδος καὶ ἀνακρίβειας, ὅ τ' ἐν τῇ μὴδὲν, ὅ τ' ἐν τῇ καὶ μὴ
 πᾶσι, ἀλλὰ ὁ σφραγιστὴς ἔτ' καὶ μὴ οὐκ ἀλλήλων, ἀλλὰ καὶ πε-
 ριέχον, καὶ μακροῦς πᾶσι δὲ καὶ μικροῦς, εἰ δὲ ἂν ἀνακρίβειας
 πᾶσι γίνεσθαι, ἀλλὰ δὲ ἐν τῇ ἀγαθῇ καὶ ἐν τῇ κακῇ, δὲ γί-
 νεσθαι ἐν τῇ καὶ ἀρχῇ, ὥστε ἀγαθὸν καὶ κακόν, πᾶσι οὖν ἔχει.

Which words I have the more largely cited because they give
 us the most full account of the antiquity, universality, and
 reason of that opinion which asserts two different principles
 of good and evil. It is a Tradition (saith he) of great an-
 tiquity derived down from the ancient Masters of Divine know-
 ledge, and formers of Commonwealths, to the Poets and Phi-
 losophers, whose first author cannot be found, and yet hath met
 with firm and unshaken belief, not only in ordinary discourses
 and reports, but was spread into the mysteries and sacrifices
 both of Greeks and others, that the Universe did not depend on
 chance, and was destitute of a mind and reason to govern it ;
 neither was there one only reason which sat at the stern, or held the
 reins, whereby he did order and govern the world ; but since
 there is so much confusion and mixture of good and evil in the
 world, that nature doth not produce any pure untainted good,
 there is not any one who like a Drawer takes the liquor out of
 two several vessels, and mixeth them together, and after distri-
 butes them ; but there are two principles and powers contrary
 to each other, whereof one draws us to the right hand, and di-
 rects us straight forward, the other pulls us back, and turns
 us the other way ; since we see the life of man so mixed as it is ;

and not only that, but the World too, at least so much as is sub-lunary and terrestrial, which is subject to many varieties, irregularities, and changes. For if nothing be without a cause; and good cannot be the cause of evil, it necessarily follows, that as there is a peculiar nature and principle, which is the cause of good, so there must be another, which is the cause of evil.

But lest we should think it was only a Set of a kind of Heathen Manichees which held this opinion; he tells us to prevent that *ἡ δὲ δοξαὶ τῶν τοῦ πάλαιου καὶ νεωτέρου*, it was the opinion of the most, and wisest, of the Heathen. Now these two principles some (saith he) call two opposite Gods, whereof the one is the cause of good, and the other of evil; him they call *Θεὸς*; this *Δαίμων*: By this one would imagine that this very ancient Tradition was nothing else, but the true account of the *Origine* of evil, a little disguised. For the *Scripture* making the Devil the first Author of evil himself, and the first solicitor and tempter of man to it, who when God directed him straight forward, pulled man back, and put him quite out of his way, by which means all the miseries in the world came into it. For while man kept close to his Maker, his integrity and obedience were to him what the *vasa umbilicalia* are to the child in the Womb; by them he received what ever tended to his subsistence and comfort; but sin cut these Vessels asunder, and proved the *Midwife* of misery, bringing man forth into a World of sorrow and sufferings: Now, I say, the *Scripture* taking such especial notice of *one* as the chief of Devils, through whose means Evil came into the world, this gave occasion to the Heathens when length of time had made the original Tradition more obscure, to make these two, God and the Damon, as two *Anti-gods*, and so to be the causes, the one of all good, and the other of all evil, which at last came to that (which was the Devils great design in thus corrupting the Tradition) that both these *Anti-gods* should have solemn worship by Sacrifices, the one by way of Impetration for bestowing of good, the other by way of Deprecation for averting of evil. Such *Plutarch* there tells us were the *Oromasdes* and *Arimanius* of *Zoroastres* which were worshipped by the *Persians*, the one for doing good, and the other for avoid-

avoyding evil; the one they resembled to light (or fire), the other to *darkness* and *ignorance*; what animals were good and usefull they ascribed to *Ormasdes*, and all venomous and noxious ones to *Arimanius*, whom *Plutarch* elsewhere calls τὸ πονηρὸν Δαίμονα Περσῶν, *the evil Damon of the Persians*. The same *Diogenes Laertius* relates of the *Magi*, the *Philosophers of Persia*, that they made two distinct principles, ὁ καλὸν Δαίμονα καὶ κακόν, *A good and bad Damon*; for which he quotes *Dion*, *Aristotle*, *Hermippus*, *Euxodius*, and others. The same *Plutarch* makes to be the opinion of the ancient *Greeks*, who attribute the good to *Jupiter Olympius*, the bad to *Hades*; the *Chaldeans*, saith he, make the *Planets* their *Gods*: of which two they suppose the cause of good; two more of onely a malignant influence, and other three to be indifferent to either. The same he affirms of the *Egyptians*, that whatever was evil, and irregular; they ascribed to *Typho*; what was good, comely and useful, they attributed to *Isis*, and *Osiris*; to *Isis* as the *passive*, to *Osiris* as the *active* principle.

Plat. in Alex. Diog. Laertius proem ad vit. Philosoph.

Thus we see how large a spread this opinion of the *Origins* of evil had in the *Gentile-world*; neither did it expire with *Heathenism*; but *Manes* retained so much of the Religion of his Country being a *Persian*, that he made a strange medley of the *Persian* and *Christian* doctrine together. For that was his famous opinion of which *Saint Austin* tells us; *Iste duo principia inter se diversa atque adversa, eademque aeterna, & aeterna hoc est, semper fuisse composuit; duasque naturas atque substantias, boni scilicet & mali, sequens alios antiquos hereticos, opinatus est.* *St. Austin* thinks that *Manes* had his opinion concerning two principles from the ancient *Hereticks*, by whom I suppose he means the *Marcionists*, and *Valentinians*; but, it seems more probable that *Manes* had his doctrine immediately from his Countrymen, though it be generally thought that *Scythianus* and *Buddas* were his masters in it. But from whomsoever it came, the opinion was merely *Heathen*, and not more contrary to *Scripture* than it is to *reason*; the former I meddle not with, that opinion being now extinct in the *Christian World*; I only briefly consider the *unreasonableness* of it, to shew what a far better

§. 10.

August de Hares. c. 46.

account of the *Origine* of evil the *Scriptures* give us, than was discovered by the *Heathen Philosophers*. For on both sides, that opinion is repugnant to the notion of a *Deity*, so that while they would make two such *Gods*, they make none at all. For, how can the principle of good be God; if he hath not *Infinite power*, as well as *goodness*? and, how can he have *Infinite power*, if he hath not the *management* of things in the World, and how can he have the *management* of things, if they be lyable to *evil*, which the other God which is the principle of *evil* may lay upon it; from which according to this supposition, the principle of good cannot rescue it? So that they who hold this opinion cannot, as *Simplicius* tells us, give God $\tau\acute{o}\ \eta\mu\iota\upsilon\ \delta\iota\ \eta\ \sigma\upsilon\lambda\lambda\eta\lambda\omega\varsigma$, the half of that infinite power which belongs to him; for, neither can he keep the good creatures which he makes from the power of the evil *Demon*; and therefore, if he loves them, must be in continual fears of the power of the contrary principle, neither can he free them from the evil which the other lays upon them; for then *Gods* power would be far greater than the evil *Demons*, and so he could be no *Anti-god*. And on the other side, the notion or *Idea* of an *Infininitely-evil Being*, is in its self an inconsistent *Idea*; for it is an *Infinite non-entirety*, if we suppose his very *Being* to lie in being evil, which is only a privation of *goodness*; and besides, if he be *Infininitely evil*, he must be infinitely contrary to the good Principle, and, how can he be infinitely contrary which enjoys several of the same *perfections* which the other hath, which are infinity of *essence* and *necessity of existence*? Now, if this Principle of evil be absolutely contrary to the other, it must be contrary in all his *perfections*; for, whatever is a *perfection*, belongs to that which is good; and now, if it be contrary in every perfection; *Infinity of essence*, and *necessity of existence*, being two, it must be as contrary as is imaginable to them, by which this evil Principle must be infinitely defective in *Being* and *existence*, and so it will be an infinite non-entirety which yet exists, which is the height of contradiction. Again, If there be such a contrary principle, which is the cause of all evil, then all evil falls out unavoidably, and by the power of this *Infininitely-evil principle*

principle, by which means not only all *Religion*, but all *Virtue* and *goodness* will be taken out of the World, if this evil principle be infinite; and if not infinite, no *Anti god*; and not only so, but all difference of good and evil will be taken away (and then what need making two such contrary principles to give an account of the *origine of evil*?) for when once evil becomes thus necessary, it loseth its nature as a moral evil; for, a moral evil implies in it a voluntary breach of some known Law; but, how can that breach be voluntary, which was caused by an Infinite power in the most proper way of efficiency? and, thus if all freedom of will be destroyed (as it is necessarily by this supposition) then no Government of the world by Laws can be supposed, and consequently no reward or punishment, which suppose liberty of action; and by this means all Religion, Laws, and Providence are banished out of the World, and so this evil *Demon* will get all into his own hands, and instead of two contrary principles, there will be but one infinitely evil *Demon*. Which that there is not, appears by this, that notwithstanding all the evil in the world there is so much good left in it, of which there would be none, if this evil *Demon* had Infinite power. By this we see there cannot be a principle infinitely evil; for, while they go about to make two such contrary principles infinite, they make neither of them so; and so while they make two Gods, they take away any at all. So that this opinion of the *Origine of evil*, is manifestly absurd, irrational, and contradictory.

But all the *Heathen Philosophers* were not so gross as to imagine two such *Anti-gods*, with infinitely active power; but yet those who would not in terms assert it, might be driven to it by the consequence of their opinion concerning the *Origine of evil*, which did suppose a necessity of it in Nature, as flowing from that passive principle out of which the World was produced. Hence it was that *Heraclitus*, as *De Isid.* *Plutarch* tells us, attributed the *Origine of all things* to disorder and antipathy; and was wont to say, that when *Homer* wished

9. 11.

ἐκ τῆς ἀντιπαθείας ἐκ τῆς ἀντιπαθείας ἀντιπαθείας.

That

that all contention were banished out of the world, that he did secretly curse the origine of things and wished the ruine of the World. So Empedocles called the active principle which did good *Harmony* and *Friendship*, but the other,

Νῦν δ' ἐὶ δόμον καὶ δῖον αἰματόεσσαν.

by which he makes it to be a *quarrelsome*, *pernicious*, and *bloody principle*. The same *Plutarch* tells us of those two renowned *Philosophers*, *Pythagoras* and *Plato*. Thence he tells us, the *Pythagoreans* called the principle of good τὸ ἐν, ἡμιπρόσθον, τὸ ὤρον, τὸ εὐθὺ, τὸ ὁμαλόν, τὸ τετραγώνιον, τὸ δίπλουν, τὸ ἡμισυγόνον. *Unity*, *finite*, *quiescent*, *straight*, *uneven number*, *square*, *right* and *splendid*; the principle of evil, they called τὸ ὑπὸ δυνάμει, τὸ ἀμείνον, τὸ περισπῶμεν, τὸ ἑμικύκλιον, τὸ ἄγνον, τὸ στροβιλικόν, τὸ ἀκίνητον, τὸ ἀεικίνητον, τὸ σκοτεινόν *The Binary*, *Infinite*, *moving*, *crooked*, *even*, *long of one side*, *unequal*, *left*, *obscure*. The opinion of *Plato* he tells us is very *obscure*, it being his purpose to conceal it; but he saith in his old age in his book de *Legibus*, ἐὶ δ' αἰνυμένη, ἐὶ δ' οὐκ ὁρατὴ, *without any if or and's*, he asserts the World to be moved by more then one principle, by two at the least, τὸ ἄγαθον καὶ τὸ κακόν, ἡ καλὴ καὶ ἡ κακὴ δύναμις, *The one of a good and benign nature, the other contrary to it both in its nature and operations*. *Numenius* in *Chalcidius* thus delivers the opinions of *Pythagoras* and *Plato* de originibus as he speaks; *Igitur Pythagoras quoque, inquit Numenius, fluidam & sine qualitate sylvam esse censet; nec tamen ut Stoici natura media, interque malorum bonorumque viciniam, sed plane noxiam; Deum quippe esse (ut etiam Platonis videtur) initium & causam bonorum; Sylvam, malorum*: So that according to *Numenius*, both *Plato* and *Pythagoras* attributed the origine of evil to the malignity of matter, and so they make evils to be necessarily consequent upon the Being of things. For thus he delivers expressly the opinion of *Pythagoras*; qui ait, existente providentia, mala quoque necessario substituisse; propterea quod sylvā sit, & eadem sit malitia pradita: Platonemque idem *Numenius* laudat, quod duas mundi animas autumat. Unam beneficentissimam; malignam alteram, sc. Sylvam. *Igitur juxta Platonem*

Chalcid. in
Tima. p.
394.

tonem

tanquam mundo bona sua Dei, tanquam Patriæ, liberalitate collata sunt; mala vero, matris sylvæ visio cohaerant. But, *Plin. De animalibus* will by no means admit, that *Plato* attributes the *Origin of evil* meerly to *matter*; but he makes the principle of *evil* to be something distinct from *matter*, which he calls *τὸ ἀτακτὸν, καὶ ἀόριστον, αὐτοκίνητον ὃ καὶ κινητικὸν ἀρχαῖον*, a confused, infinite, self-moving, stirring Principle; which (saith he) he elsewhere calls *Necessity*, and in his book *de Legib.* plainly, *Ἡ ἀτακτὸν καὶ ἐκακότης*, a disorderly and malignant Soul, which cannot be understood of meer *matter*, when he makes his *Hyle* *ἀμορφὸν καὶ ἀσχημάτιστον καὶ πῶς ποιεῖται* & *ὑποκείμενον ὁμοίᾳ* *ἴσχυρος*, without form or figure, and destitute of all qualities and power of operation: and it is impossible (saith he) that that which is of its self such an inert principle as *matter* is, should by *Plato* be supposed to be the cause and principle of *evil*, which he elsewhere calls *ἀνάγκη πολλὰ πρὸ θεῶν διαμαχέσασθαι καὶ ἀπελπίσαι*, *Necessity* which often resisted God and cast off his reins. So that according to *Plutarch* *Plato* acquits both God and *Hyle* from being the *Origin of evil*, *τίω γὰρ ὅλως διαπορεύς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀπαιδέτου, καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ τίω καὶ τοῦ κακοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀπαιδέτου πηλοῦ*, and therefore attributes it to that malignant Spirit which moves the *matter*, and is the cause of all the disorderly motions in the world. But what this Spirit should be, neither he nor any one else could ever understand, What darkness and ignorance then was there among the wisest of Philosophers concerning the *Origin of evil*, when they were so confused and obscure in the account which they gave of it, that their greatest admirers could not understand them!

But though *Plato* seemed so ambiguous in his judgement of the *Origin of evil*, whether he should attribute it to the *Hyle*, or some malignant Spirit in it; the *Stoicks* were more dogmatical, and plainly imputed the cause of *evil* to the perversity of *matter*. So *Chalcidius* tells us, that the *Stoicks* made *matter* not to be *evil* in its self as *Pythagoras*, but that it was indifferent to either; *perrogati igitur, unde mala?* *Chalcid. in Tim. p. 395.* they made the perversity of *matter* the *Origin of evil*; but as he well observes, *nec expediunt adhuc unde ipsa perversitas cum iuxta ipsos duo sint initia rerum, Deus & sylvæ. Deus summum & præcel-*

præcellens bonum ; sylvæ, ut censent, nec bonum nec malum,
 They give no rational account whence this perversity of
 matter should arise, when according to the *Stoicks*, there
 are but two principles of things, *God and Matter*, whereof the
 one is perfectly good, the other neither good nor evil. But,
 this perversity they tell us is something necessarily conse-
 quent upon the Generation of things. ταῦτα γὰρ ὅτι παρὰ τὰ τῶν
 γένεσις ἀνεκφυγία, ὡς αὖτε ἰσχυρὰ χαλεπὰ, καὶ ἐκ φύσεως τὰ σαυαντά,

these are afflictions (viz. the disorders in the world) which
follow the Generation of things, as rust comes upon brass, and

Maxim.

Tyrinus

Serm. 29.

Seneca de

Provid. c. 5

filth upon the body, as the counterfeit Trismegistus speaks ; so

Maximus Tyrinus saith, that evils in the world are ἐκ φύσεως

ἔργα, καὶ οὐκ ὕλης παρὰ τὴν, not any works of art, but the afflictions of

matter. Non potest artifex mutare materiam, saith Seneca,

when he is giving an account why God suffers evils in the

Præfat. ad

natur.

quæst.

world: and elsewhere gives this account why evils came into

the world, non quia cessat ars, sed quia id in quo excrucatur

inobsequens arti est. So that the Origin of evil by this ac-

count of it lyes wholly upon the perversity of matter, which

it seems was incapable of being put into better order by

that God who produced the world out of that matter which

the Stoicks supposed to be eternal. And the truth is, the

avoiding the attributing the cause of evil to God, seems to

have been the great reason, why they rather chose to make

matter necessary and coexistent with God, and this was the

only plausible pretence which Hermogenes had for following

the Platonists and Stoicks in this opinion, that he might set

God far enough off from being the author of sin ; but, I can-

not see what advantage comes at all by this Hypothesis, but

it is chargeable with as many difficulties as any other. For,

I.

1. It either destroyes Gods omnipotency, or else makes him the

approver of evil, so that if he be not author, he must be

assentator mali, as Tertullian speaks against Hermogenes, be-

Tertull. adv.

Hermog.

c. 10.

cause he suffered evil to be in Matter ; for, as he argues, Aut

enim potuit emendare sed noluit, aut voluit quidem, verum non

potuit infirmus Deus ; si potuit & noluit, malum & ipse quia

malo favit ; & sic jam habetur ejus licet non instituerit, quia

tamen si noluisset illud esse, non esset ; ipse jam fecit esse, quod

noluit non esse, quo quid est turpinum ? Si voluit esse quod ipse

noluit.

voluit fecisse, adversum semetipsum egit, cum & voluit esse quod noluit fecisse, & noluit fecisse quod voluit esse. So that little advantage is gained for the clearing the true *Origin* of evil by this opinion; for, either *God* could have taken away evil out of *matter* but would not, or else would but could not; this latter destroyes *Gods* omnipotency, the former his goodness; for, by that means evil is in the world by his consent and approbation: for, if *God* would not remove it when he might, the *Being* of it will come from him; when, if he would have hindred it, it would not have been, and so *God* by not rooting out of evil, will be found an assertor of it; *male, si per voluntatem; surpiter, si per necessitatem: aut famulus eris mali Deus, aut amicus.* If *Gods* will were the cause why sin was, it reflects on his goodness; if *Gods* power could not hinder it, it destroyes his omnipotency. So that by this opinion *God* must either be a slave or a friend to evil. 2. This principle overturns the foundations of Religion, and all transactions between *God* and mens souls in order to their welfare, because it makes evil to be necessarily existent in the World; which appears from hence, in that evil doth result from the *Being* of matter, and so it must necessarily be, as matter is supposed to be; for, whatever results from the *Being* of a thing, must be coexistent with it; and, so what flows from what doth necessarily exist, must have the same mode of existence which the *Being* it self hath; as is evident in all the attributes of *God*, which have the same immutability with his nature: now then if evil did exist from eternity together with matter, it must necessarily exist as matter doth, and so evil will be invincible and unavoidable in the World: which if once granted, renders Religion useless, makes *Gods* commands unrighteous, and destroyes the foundation of *Gods* proceedings in the day of Judgment. 3. This opinion makes *God* not to be the author of good, while it denies him to be the Author of evil. For, either there was nothing else but evil in this eternal matter, or there was a mixture of good and evil; if nothing else but evil which did necessarily exist, it were as impossible for *God* to produce good out of it, as to annihilate the necessarily existent matter. If there were a mixture of good and evil, they were both there either necessarily or contin-

gently; how could either of them be contingently in that which is supposed to be necessarily existent, and no free agent? If they be both there necessarily, 1. It is hard conceiving how two such contrary things as good and evil, should both necessarily be in the same uniform matter. 2. Then God is no more the Author of good then of evil in the World; for, he is said not to be the Author of evil because it comes from matter; and so it appears, good doth too; and so God according to this opinion, is no more the Author of good then he is of evil. But if it be said, that good is not in matter, but God produced that out of nothing: Then I reply, 1. If God did produce good out of nothing, why did he not produce matter out of nothing too; if he were so powerfull as to do the one, there could be no defect of power as to the other. What insufficiency is there in Gods nature for producing all things out of nothing, if he can produce any thing out of nothing? 2. If God did produce good out of evil, why could he not have removed all evil out of matter? for good could not be produced, but by the removing of some evil which was before that good, and so God might have removed all evil out of matter. And so by not doing it when he might, this opinion gives not the least satisfaction in point of reason for acquitting God from being the Author of sin, nor for clearing the true Origin of evil.

- §. 13. Thus we have now compared the account given of it in Scripture, with that given by the Heathen Philosophers, and find it in every thing more clear, rational, and satisfactory then theirs is. Which doubtless is the reason; why the more modern Philosophers, such as Hierocles, Porphyrie, Simplicius and others, though otherwise great opposers of Christianity, did yet in this side with the Scriptures and attribute the original of evil, not to matter but to the will of man. And whoever is seriously conversant with the writings of those Philosophers, who were in the sacred succession, out of the School of Ammonius at Alexandria, such as Plotinus, Porphyrius, Iamblichus, and Hierocles, will find them write in a higher strain concerning many weighty and important truths; as of the degeneracy of mens souls from God, and the way of the souls returning to him,

him, than the most *sublime* of the ancient *Philosophers* had done. Which *speculations* of theirs no doubt arose not so much from the *School of Plato*, and *Pythagoras*, as of that great restorer of *Philosophy*, *Ammonius* of *Alexandria*; whose *Scholars* *Herennius*, *Origen* and *Plotinus* were. Who living and dying a Christian, as *Eusebius* and *Hierom* Euseb. Eccl. hist. l. 6. cap. 19. assure us, whatever *Porphyrus* suggests to the contrary, did Herony. de Script. Eccl. De vit. & Script. Porphy. c. 6. communicate to his *Scholars* the sublimer *mysteries* of *Divine revelation*, together with the *speculations* of the ancient *Philosophers*: which *Holstenius* conceives he did with an adoration of *secrecy*, which he tells us *Porphyrus* himself acknowledgeth, that those three *Scholars* of *Ammonius*, *Herennius*, *Origen*, and *Plotinus* were under an obligation to each other not to reveal and discover, though it were after violated by them. It is an easie matter to conceive what an excellent *improvement* might be made of the ancient *Platonick Philosophy* by the advantage of the *Scriptures*, by one who was so well versed in both of them, as *Ammonius* is supposed to have been; and how agreeable and becoming would that *Philosophy* seem which had only its rise from *Plato*, but its height and *improvement* from those rich and truly divine *Truths* which were inlaid with them? The want of observing this, *viz.* Whence it was that those excellent *discourses* in the latter *Platonists* had their true original, hath given occasion to several mistakes among learned men: as first the overvaluing of the *Platonick Philosophy*, as though in many of the *discourses* and *notions* of it, it seemed to some (who were more in Love with *Philosophy* than the *Scriptures*) to out-go what is *discovered* therein concerning the same things. A most groundless and unworthy *censure*! when it is more then *probable* (and might be largely manifested, were it here a fit opportunity) that whatever is truly generous and noble in the *sublimest discourses* of the *Platonists*, had not only its primitive rise, but its *accession* and *improvement* from the *Scriptures*, wherein it is still contained in its native lustre and beauty, without those *paintings* and impure *mixtures* which the *sublimest truths* are corrupted with in the *Platonick writings*. The reason of which is, though these *Philosophers* grew suddenly rich through the

spoyle they had taken out of the Scriptures, yet they were loth to be known from whence they had them, and would seem to have had that out of their own Gardens which was only transplanted from the *Sacred Writings*. Therefore we find them not mentioning the *Scriptures* and the *Christian Doctrine*, without some contempt of its *meanneſs* and simplicity, and whatever improvement they had gained by them, they would have it leſs taken notice of by profeſſing their *oppoſition* to the *Chriſtians*, as is noꝛious in thoſe great *Philophers*, *Porphyrim*, *Jamblicus*, *Hierocles*, *Simplicius*, and others. It being their deſign to take ſo much and no more out of the *Chriſtian doctrine* as they could well ſuit with their *Platonick notions*, by which means they ſo diſguiſed the *faces* of the *Truths* they ſtole, that it were hard for the right owners of them to know them again. Which was the *grand artifice* of their great Maſter *Plato*, who doubtleſs by means of his abode and acquaintance in *Aegypt* about the time when the *Jews* began to flock thither, had more certain knowledge of many *truths* of grand importance, concerning the *Deity*, the *nature* of the *soul*, the *Origin* of the *world*, then many other *Greek Philophers* had; but yet therein lay his great fault, that he wrapt up and diſguiſed his notions in ſuch a *fabulous* and ambiguous manner, that partly it might be leſs known from whence he had them, and that they might find better entertainment among the *Greeks*, then they were ever like to do in their plain and native dreſs. Which *Plato* himſelf ſeems ſomewhere to intimate, when he ſaith, that what the *Greeks* received from the *Barbarians*, *καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἑλλήνων ἀνθρώπων*, they put it into a better faſhion, i. e. they diſguiſe it, alter and change it as they pleaſe, and put it into a *Greek habit*, that it might never be ſuſpected to have been a *Forraigner*. Thence *Tertullian* ſpeaks with a great deal of truth and freedom of ſuch *Philophers* who did *ingenii ſitum de prophetarum fonte irrigari* (as he expreſſeth it) that quenched their thirſt after knowledge with the waters of *Jordan* (though they did not like *Naaman*, cure the *leproſie* of the head by waſhing in them); for as *Tertullian* ſaith, they came only *ex negotio curioſitatis*, more to pleaſe the *itch* of their curioſity then to cure it.

Plato in
Epinom.

Apol. c. 47.

And wherein they seemed most to agree with the Scriptures, their difference was beyond their agreement. *Siquidem vera quaque & consonantia Prophetis, aut aliunde com-
mendant, aut alio sum subornant, cum maxima injuria ve-
ritatis, quam efficiunt aut adjuvari falsis aut patrocinari.* Tertul. de Anima cap. 2. Whatever the Philosophers speak agreeable to the Scriptures, either they do not own whence they had it, or turn it quite another way, whereby they have done the truth a great deal of injury by mixing it with their corruptions of it, and making that little truth a plea for the rest of their errors. Neither was this only among the ancient Philosophers, but the Primitive Christians began to discern the underhand workings of such, who sought to blend Philosophy and Christianity together; for Tertullian himself takes great notice of such, who did, *Veritatis dogmata ad Philosophicas sententias adulterare,* suborn Christianity to maintain Philosophy; which makes him cry out, *Viderint qui Stoicum & Platonicum, & Dial-
lecticum Christianismum prozulerunt;* by which we see what De Pro-
tampering there was betimes, rather to bring Christianity Script. ad-
vers. he-
ret. cap. 7. down to Philosophy, than to make Philosophy truckle under the truth and simplicity of the Scriptures. Whether Ammonius himself, and some others of the School of Alexandria, might be guilty in this kind, is not here a place to enquire, though it be too evident in the writings of some, that they rather seek to accommodate the Scriptures to the Sentiments of the School of Plato, than to reform that by the Scriptures; but I say, however it were with those who were Christians, yet those who were not, but only Philosophers, made their great advantage by it. For when they found what was reconcileable with the doctrine of Plato in the Scriptures, done already to their hands, by the endeavors chiefly of Ammonius and Origen, they greedily embrace those improvements of their Philosophy, which would tend so much to the credit of it, and as contemptuously reject what they found irreconcilable with the dictates of their Philosophy. Now what an unreasonable thing is it, when whatever was noble and excellent in the Heathen Philosophy was derivative from the Scriptures, as the Sacred Fount of it, that the meeting with such things should in the

the least redound to the prejudice of the *Scriptures*, from whence it was originally derived? when on the other side, it should be a great confirmation to our faith as to the *Scriptures*, that they who were professed *Philosophers* and admirers only of reason, did so readily embrace some of those grand *Truths* which are contained in the Word of God.

- §. 14. For which we need no other instance, then that before us, concerning the *Origin* of evil, the making out of which will tend to the clearing the last thing mentioned concerning it, which was, that the most material things in it are attested by the *Heathens* themselves. And this honey which is gained out of the *Lions* mouth, must needs taste sweeter than any other doth. For, it is a weak and groundless mistake on the other side, which is the second (which ariseth from meeting things consonant to the *Scriptures* in the writings of *Philosophers*) presently to conclude from such things that they were *Christians* (as it is said some have lately done in the behalf of *Hierocles*). For, there being clear accounts given in *Scripture* of the grand difficulties and perplexities which the minds of men were troubled with; when these came to the knowledge of such who were of *Philosophick* and inquisitive heads, we cannot but think they would meet with acceptance among them, especially if they might be made consistent with their former speculations. Thus it was in our present case concerning the *Origin* of evil: we have already beheld the lamentable perplexities the ancient *Philosophers* were in about it, what *Maanders* they were lost in for want of a clue to guide them through them; now it pleased God after the coming of *Christ* in the flesh to declare to the World the only way for the recovery of souls and their eternal salvation, the news of which being spread so far that it soon got among the *Philosophers*, could not but make them more inquisitive concerning the state and condition of their souls, and when they had searched what the *Philosophers* had formerly discovered of it, their curiosity would presently prompt them to see what account of things concerning the souls of men was delivered by the Preachers of this *New Doctrine*. By this they could not but presently

under.

understand that they declared all mens souls to be in a most degenerate and low condition, by being so continually under the power of the most unreasonable and unruly passions, that they were estranged from God, and prone to fix on things very unsuitable to their nature, as to all which, their own inward sense and experience could but tell them that these things were notoriously true; and therefore, they enquire further how these things came to be so; which they receive a full account of in Scripture, that mans soul was at first created pure and holy, and in perfect friendship with God, that God dealt bountifully and favourably with man; only expected obedience to his Laws; that man being a free agent, did abuse his liberty, and disobeyed his Maker; and thence came the true *Aspidochelone*, the feathers of the soul, whereby it soared up to Heaven, moulted away, and the soul sunk below its self into a degenerate and apostate condition, out of which it is impossible to be recovered without some extraordinary expression of Divine Favour. Now, what is there in all this account, but what is hugely suitable to principles of reason, and to the general experience of the world, as to those things which were capable of being tried by it? And those Philosophers who were any thing ingenious and lovers of truth, could not but confess the truth of those things which we are now speaking of, viz. That mens souls are in a very degenerate condition; That the most rational account of it, is, That man by the act of his own will, brought himself into it; and that in order to the happiness of mens souls, there was a necessity of recovery out of this condition.

As to the degeneracy of the souls of men; This was the common complaint of those Philosophers, who misdred the government of themselves, and the practice of vertue, especially of the Platonists and Stoicks. Seneca in all his moral Discourses, especially in his *Epistles*, may speak sufficiently in behalf of the Stoicks, how much they lamented the degeneracy of the world. And the Platonists all complain of the slavery of the soul in the body, and that it is here by way of punishment for something which was done before; which makes me somewhat inclinable to think, that Plato knew more of the lapse of mankind, than he would openly

discover, and for that end disguised it after his usual manner in that hypothesis of *pra-existence*, which taking it *Cabbalistically* (for I rather think the opinion of *pra-existence* is so to be taken, than the *history* of the *Fall of man*) may import only this, *That mens souls might be justly supposed to be created happy, but by reason of the Apostacy of mans soul from God, all souls now come into their bodies as into a kind of prison, they being enslaved to the brutish part within them, there having been such a true πρὸπύνη, the soul being now deprived of her chiefest perfections in this her low and degenerate condition.* And it seems far more rational to me to interpret those persons opinions to a *Cabbalistical*, or an *Allegorical* sense, who are known to have *designedly* writ in a way *obscure and ambiguous*, than to force those mens expressions to *Cabbala's*, who profess to write a *plain History*, and that with the greatest *simplicity and perspicuity*; But it cannot but seem very strange, that an hypothesis capable of being reconciled to the plain *literal* sense of the *Scriptures* (delivered by a person who useth great *artifice and cunning* to disguise his opinions, and such a person withall, who (by such persons themselves, who make use of this opinion to that end) is supposed to have been very conversant with the writings of *Moses*) should be taken in its *literal* sense, as it really imports *pra-existence* of each particular soul in the *gross*est manner; and this should be made to be a part of the *Philosophick Cabbala* of the writings of such a person, who useth not the least *artifice* to disguise his sense, nor gives us any where the least intimation that he left behind him such *plained pictures* in his *History* of the beginning of the world, that if you look straight forward, you may see a little *Cabbala*, on the one side a *Philosophical*, and on the other a *Moral*. But now if we remove the *Cabbala* from *Moses* to *Plato*, we may find no *incongruity or repugnancy* at all either as to *Plato* his way of writing, or the *consonancy* of the opinion so interpreted to the plain genuine sense of *Moses*, if by *Plato* his opinion of the *Pra-existence* and descent of souls, be understood by the former the happy state of the soul of man in conjunction with God, and by the latter, the low and degenerate condition which the soul is in, after *Apostacy* from him. Which the latter *Platonists* are so large and eloquent

eloquent in expressing; Porphyrie, where he speaks of some things he counsels men to do, hath these words, *But if we cannot do them, let us at least do that which was so much lamented of old*, τὸ ἐρητύειν τοὺς ψυχῶν μαλακίας, which is αὖς τοῖον *let us at least* ἐπεὶ νεκρῶν ἡρώματα, ὅπ τὸ θῆον ἐ ἀκίεατο, ἐ De Affli-
 ἐ πόνιν ἀβλαβὲς πῶζεν ἡ δυνάμει. *Let us at least join with our Fore-fathers in lamenting this, that we are compounded of* such disagreeing and contrary principles, that we are not able to preserve divine, pure and unspotted Innocency. And Hierocles fully expresseth his sense of the degeneracy of mankind in these words: οἱ γὰρ πάντες κακοί, ἐ τῇ περὶ αὐτοὺς ἡμῶν *Hierocl. in*
 ἐ ποικιλοφάνειαν ὑπὸ τῆς εἰς γὰρ νεύσεως ἡρώματα αὖς ἐ τῶν παρ' *Pythag.*
 ἡμῶν τὸ κακὸν ἔχειν, διὰ τὸ βυλῶνται φυγεῖν ἀπὸ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἀπο- *Carm. p.*
 μένουσιν αὐτοὺς τῆς τέτης ἡμελίας, ἥς δὲ πύχυν ἐ ἀνγῶν ἡμῶν δι- *261.*
 ἀγορῆς. ἡ γὰρ ἀπὸ Θεοῦ χωρίσμεν βλάπτουσα τὰς σφέναις ἡμῶν γὰρ
 νῦν εἰς δαλῶν. *The most of men in the world are bad, and under the command of their passions, and grown impotent through their propensity to earth; which great evil they have brought upon themselves, by their wilful Apostacy from God, and withdrawing themselves from that society with him, which they once enjoyed in pure light: which departure of mens souls from God, which is so hurtful to the minds of men, is evident by their strong inclination to the things of this world. The same Author mentions, with much approbation, that speech of Heraclitus, speaking of those souls which are ἀπὸ τῶν εἰς κακίας, which I cannot better render, than un-
 declinably good, he saith, ὅτι ζῶμεν ἡ ἐκείνων θάνατον, περὶ καὶ ὅ τιν ἐκείνων εἶον: We live their death, and dye their life. καὶ τῶν γὰρ καὶ ἀποπίπτει τῆς δῶδμου ὅ χωρεῖ ὁ ἀνθρώπος. For man is now fallen down from that blessed Region; and as Empedocles the Pythagorean speaks,*

Φυγὰς διδίδεν ἐ ἀλήτης
 Νείκεν μαινομένη πόντι.

Which words cannot be better rendred, than in the words the Scripture useth concerning Cain, and he went from the presence of the Lord, and was a fugitive in the earth, and under continual perplexities. For the Soul of man ha-

Hierocles
in Pythag.
p. 254.

ving left ἡ λευκὴ τῆς ἀληθείας (it is *Hierocles* his own expression) the pleasant *Meadow of Truth* (a fit description of *Paradise*) τῇ ὁρμῇ τῆς ἀπερρόβητος εἰς γῆρας ἔρχεται σῶμα ὡς ἐκ αἰῶνος ἀμείβεσθαι. Through the violence of her moulting, or depulmation, she comes into this earthly body, deprived of that blessed life, which she before enjoyed. Which he tells us is very consonant to *Plato's* sense of the ἡρώδης, or descent of *Souls*, that when by reason of their impotency of fixing wholly on God, they suffer στερήσεων καὶ ἀπορρίψεως, some great loss, and a deprivation of former perfections (which I suppose is meant by the ἀπερρόβητος, the souls impotency of flying up above this earthly world) then they lapse into these terrestrial and mortal bodies. So *Hierocles* concludes with this excellent and Divine speech, ἄσπετος ἔνι θεῷ ἐν φυχῇ, καὶ ἡ ἀπερρόβητος ὅτι καὶ ζῶντες ἡμᾶς πρὸς τὸ αἶν εἰς τὸν ὅτι θνητῶν ἡμεῖς καὶ πόρος, οἱ τὸ κοινὸν συνίχετο. ὅπως ἔνι αὐτῆς θνητῆς περὶ αἰῶνος ἀμείβεσθαι, καὶ ἡ τῶν ἀρετῶν, οἷον πειρὰ πῶς, ἔκαστος πρὸς τὸν ὅτι καλῶν καὶ ἀγαθῶν πόρος, εἰς τὴν θείαν εὐχαιῶν, ἡμᾶς ἀνάγει. As therefore by Apostacy from God, and the moulting of those feathers of our souls, whereby we may be raised up above this world, we have fallen into this place of mortals which is compassed about with evils: So by the casting off carnal affections, and by the growth of virtues like new Feathers to the Soul, we shall ascend to the place of pure and perfect good, and to the enjoyment of a divine life. So much more becoming *Christians* do these excellent Philosophers speak of the degeneracy of mens souls, and the consequents of it, than some, who would be accounted the followers of reason as well as of *Christ*, who make it so much of their business to extenuate the fall of man. Which we find those who were meer Philosophers, far more rational and ingenuous in, than those who pretend so highly to reason; but I think with as little of it as any, supposing the *Scriptures* to be of Divine Authority. But it is not here our business to consider the opinions of those who pretend to *Christianity*; but only of such, who pretending only to reason, have yet consented with the Doctrine of the *Scriptures* as to the degeneracy of the Souls of men, that it lyes in an Apostacy from God, and have lost those perfections which they had before. That

συμφορὰ καὶ τὴν μὴ τὴν ἀντιφύσιν. So that on both sides men bring misery upon themselves, by transgressing the Divine Law, both by not doing what they are commanded, and by doing what they are forbidden. So that he fully ascribes the *Origine* of evil to the τὴν ἀντιφύσιν αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἄνθρωπου, as he calls it, the irregular motion of the will of man, which we have already shewed to be the doctrine of the Scriptures.

3. *As to the necessity of the souls recovery from this condition in order to her felicity, we have these Philosophers expressing their consent with the Scriptures.* Porphyrius, as *Auguſt. de Civit. Dei. l. 10. c. 32.* *St. Auſtin* tells us in the end of his first Book *De regressu animæ*, doth acknowledge the necessity of a way of recovering souls, which should be universal. *Cum autem dicit Porphyrius, nondum receptam unam quandam sectam, quæ universalem viam animæ contineat liberanda, — nondumq, in suam notitiam eandem viam historiali cognitione perlatam, proculdubio confitetur esse aliquam, sed nondum in suam venisse notitiam.* But the necessity of the purgation of the soul in order to its felicity, is so largely and fully discoursed of by all the *Platonists* and *Pythagoreans*, that it will be needless to insist upon it. Thus far then we find the account given of the *Origine* of evil in Scripture to be embraced by the *sublimest* of the *Heathen Philosophers*, as most rational and satisfactory; which was the thing to be proved.

- §. 17. Neither do we find only the main of this account acknowledged as rational, but we may trace some not obscure footsteps of the truth of the particular circumstances which concern the fall of man: among the *Heathens*, such as the *Devils* envying of mans happiness, his disguising himself under the form of a *Serpent*, and mans being thrown out of *Paradise* upon his fall.

D. Casaubon Origines of Temporal evils,

1. *The Devils envying the happiness of man.* It hath been truly observed by a learned man, that the original of that very ancient opinion among the *Heathen* *de invidia Damonis* had its rise from the history of the fall of man, which he hath made out so fully, that I shall the less need to prove it. And that there was an undoubted tradition of some malignant spirits which envied the welfare of mankind; appears by that ample Testimony of *Plutarch* in his *Dis* mentioned by the

the same Author; *ἐκ τούτων καὶ τῶν παλαιῶν ἀπομνημονεύματων* *οὐδὲν ἄλλο λέγουσι, ὡς τὰ πάλαι λαμβάνειν ἔστιν ἀπομνημονεύματα τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς ἀποδοῦναι καὶ τῶν κακῶν ἐπιτιμᾶν, καὶ ἔχει καὶ εἰς τὴν ἐπίστασιν καὶ σπουδὴν τῶν ἀρετῶν ὡς μὴ δὴ μόνον ἀποδοῦναι ἐν τῇ ἐλπίδι καὶ ἀλειτουργίᾳ, βελτίονος ἐκείνων μόνον κατὰ τὴν παιδείαν τῶν χρόνων.* Plutarch was much troubled to give an account of the apparitions which Brutus and Cassius who were learned and Philosophical men were haunted withall; and doubts, he can give no just account of it, unless he embraced that very ancient tradition (which yet seemed absurd and incredible) viz. that there are certain wicked and malignant Demons, which envy good men, and withstand their enterprizes, by raising fears and troubles to them, that so they might hinder them in their pursuit of vertue; lest if they continue steadfast and unmovable in good, they should be at last partakers of greater felicity than they enjoy. There being then so ancient a tradition of such vicious Demons (as the learned man mentioned hath more fully shewed in his notes on this place of Plutarch) gives a great confirmation to the truth of what the Scripture reports concerning the Devils being so great an instrument in procuring the fall of man. To him therefore I referr the inquisitive reader, and shall only add to the Testimonies of him cited, that of Xenocrates in Plutarch de Iside & Osiride, where he saith, that the calamities of life and misfortunes men meet with, do not agree with that veneration which we have for the Deity and good Spirits, *ἀλλ' ἵνα εὖ οὖτος ἐν τῇ ἀποστολῇ μαρτυρῶν καὶ ἰσχυρῶς ἀποδείκνυσι καὶ σαφηνεύει, αἱ χαίρουσι τοῖς τοῖς αἰσίοις.* But that there are in the Air some great and potent Beings, which are of a surly and malignant nature, and rejoyce to do men all the mischief they can. Jamblichus in his answer to Porphyrius concerning the Egyptian mysteries, undertakes to give an account of these evil Spirits or Demons, and that from them the Origin of evil in the world is; for thus he speaks (as he is translated by Facinus) *Si verum est quod de Idolis dicebamus, improbiſque Damonibus, hinc sane emoritur multiplex origo malorum. Simulant enim Deorum praesentiam, damnumque bonorum, ideoque cultorem sanum iubens esse iustum, ut ipsi videantur boni, sicut & Di; quoniam vero natura sunt*

funi mali, rogati mala inferre, libenter inferant, atque nobis ad iniusta conducant. Hi sunt omnino qui & in oraculis mentium & fallunt, & turpia consulant atque peragunt. By which we see, he acknowledgeth some spirits whose natures are wicked, and help men to do evil, and that these very spirits may sometimes command that which is good, lest they should be suspected to be what they are, of a wicked and malignant nature, which only design the ruin of men. By which we have a good account of whatever was commendable delivered by the *Heathen Oracles*, which yet might come from the *Devil* still, by this confession of *Jamblichus* himself.

§. 18.

2.

Orig. Cels.
lib 6.

For the Devils appearing under the form of a Serpent; It is very probably conjectured, that from hence it was that the Prince of those who contended with *Saturn*, was by that enigmatical writer *Pherecydes Syrus*, called *Ophiocelsus*, who had so little skill in antiquity, as to think that the history of *Moses* was, as to many passages of it, taken out of *Heathen Fables*, insists on this very story of *Ophiocelsus* as the ground-work of that relation in *Genesis* concerning the *Fall*. But *Origen* well answers him, οὐ γὰρ ἐν, ἐν μὲν δὲ ἐγκαλεῖται ἡμῶν ὁ σφαιριώδης ἀσπίς, καὶ ἀποκρινόμενος εἰπὼν ἀνερῶν, ἀντὶς οὐκ ἔστι σφαιρίδι; μὴ κατανοήσεις ὅτι τὰ πολλὰ ὅ ἐκ τῶν ἑκαταίων καὶ φερεκύδης ἀρχαίων, οὐκ ἔστι Οὐρανός, Μανύσης γὰρ μῦθος ἐστὶν ὅτι τὸν θεὸν ποτὶς εἶδεν καὶ ἐκπορεύετο φερεκύδης λέγων. See therefore if this rare Antiquary, who charges us with impiety in corrupting and altering the *Heathen Fables*, be not himself more justly chargeable with the same fault, not understanding the far greater antiquity of the writings of *Moses*, than either of *Heracitus*, or *Pherecydes*, or *Homer* himself, which reports the story of that evil on which fell from *Heaven*. ὁ γὰρ οὗτος (παρ' ἐν ὅδε τὸ φερεκύδης γέγονεν Οφιοκύδης) οὐ γὰρ ἡδὲ καὶ τὸ ἐγκαλεῖται τὸ θεὸν εἶδεν τὸν ἀδριανόν, τοιαῦτα πῶς αὐτῶν, ἐκαταίων θεῶν καὶ καὶ ὅσων ἀπαιτοῦσι τὸ φερεκύδης ἡδὲ. ὁ οὐρανοδουκίαν λέγει καὶ ὁ ἀντὶς. For the Serpent (from which *Ophiocelsus* in *Pherecydes* derived his name) which was the cause why man was cast forth of *Paradise*, doth intimate some such thing, while under a pretence of *Divinity*, and of a better condition, he first deceived the woman, and by her means the man. *Celsus Rhodiginus* calls this

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this *Ophioneus* *Demonicum Serpentem*, qui *antesignanus* fuerat *ugminis à Divina mentis placito deficientis*. This *Pherecydes*, as appears by *Eusebius*, had much converse with the *Phœnicians*; where he purposely speaks concerning this *Ophioneus*. Now the *Phœnicians*, as *Eusebius* likewise tells us, worshipped their God under the Form of a *Serpent*; which probably might be occasioned by the *Devils* ambition and *Tyranny* over men, that he would be worshipped among them in that very Form wherein he had done so much mischief to the world. It was very early in the world, when the *Phœnicians* and *Egyptians* did begin to adore their Gods under the Form of *Serpents*, for the beginning of it is attributed to *Taautus* by *Eusebius*, τῶν ὡς ἐν τῷ Δρακόντι εἶδον καὶ τὸ ἴδιον αὐτοῦ εἰδόμενοι ὁ Ταυτοῦ καὶ μετ' αὐτὸν αὐτοῖς Φοινίκης τε καὶ Ἀγύπτου. Neither was this only among the *Phœnicians* and *Egyptians*, but where-ever the *Devil* reigned, the *Serpent* was had in some peculiar veneration; thence *Iustin Martyr* saith, Ὁ δὲ πᾶν νομιζόμενον παρ' ὑμῶν θεῶν οὐκ οὐκ ὡς λατρεύουσιν αἱ μυήματα ἀσφαλείας; the *Serpent* was the Symbol of adoration among them; and was the proper *Indicium* or note of a consecrated place, as is evident by that of *Perfius*:

Pinge duos angues; pueri, sacer est locus.

Satyr. i.

Thence the *Scholiast* on *Aristophanes* on that place in *Plutus* ἐξ ἧς τὸν ἐν δύο δράκοντι ἐκ τῶν νεῶν, observes κατὰ πᾶσι τοῖς ἱεροῖς δράκοντες παρατίθενται, so that where ever any God or Heroe was to be worshipped, there were *Serpents* painted, to denote so much. So *Ormus Apollo* saith of the *Egyptians*, ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁ εἶναι ἰκνωσὶ κασιγίχων χρυσοῦν ἐκτινάζει τοῖς θεοῖς, they were wont to put the form of a golden *Basilisk* to their Gods. *Heinsius* conceives that the first worship of *Apollo* at *Delfi* was under the form of a *Serpent*, whither *Nonnus* tells us that *Cadmus* the *Phœnician* went upon his first coming into *Boeotia*, and from hence he derives the name *Pytho* from the Hebrew *נָח* which signifies a *Serpent*. Ut non dubitandum sit, saith he, quin *Pythius Apollo*, hoc est, *Spurcus ille spiritus*, quem *Hebraei Ob & Ebaddon*, *Hellenista ad verbum Ἀπολλωνας*, cetera Ἀπολλωνας dixerunt, sub hac forma qua miseriam humano ge-

U u u

neri

neri invexit, primo cultus fit in Gracia. And, which is further observable, the Devil was alwayes ambitious to have the world think that the knowledge of good and evil was to come by the Serpens still ; thence the famous Oracle of Apollo here at Delphi ; thence came the use of Serpens so much in Divination ; thence $\Pi\Omega$ signifies to divine from $\Pi\Omega$ a Serpent ; and so among the Greeks $\delta\iota\omega\lambda\iota\zeta\alpha\delta\gamma$ is taken in the same sense, from, $\delta\iota\omega\lambda\iota\varsigma$ a Serpent. So that excellent Glossographer Hesychius ; $\delta\iota\omega\lambda\iota\varsigma$, $\delta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ $\delta\iota\omega\lambda\iota\varsigma$ $\gamma\delta$ $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omicron\nu$ $\epsilon\varsigma$ $\tau\alpha\varsigma$ $\mu\alpha\sigma\tau\epsilon\iota\alpha\varsigma$ $\tau\omega\delta$ $\delta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ $\epsilon\chi\epsilon\iota\tau$ $\delta\epsilon$ $\chi\omega$ $\delta\iota\omega\lambda\iota\varsigma$ $\delta\lambda\alpha\gamma\omicron\nu$. The Serpent was reckoned among the pedestria auspicia by the Romans ; and Homer tells in that solemn divination concerning the Greeks success at Troy there appears,

Iliad. B.

$\delta\epsilon\alpha\kappa\omega\upsilon$ $\delta\tau\iota$ $\nu\omega\tau\alpha$ $\delta\epsilon\alpha\phi\omicron\iota\tau$.

Which, saith Heinsius, is an exact description of the *Nachus* ; whom they would have so called from the marks on his back, which they accurately observed in divination. Thus we see how careful the Devil was to advance his honour in the world under that Form, wherein he had deceived mankind into so much folly and misery.

3.

Origen. c.
Cels. l. 4.
p. 189.

We meet with some remainders of mans being cast out of Paradise upon his fall among the Heathens. Origen thinks that Plato by his converse with the Jews in Egypt, did understand the history of the fall of man, which he after his way enigmatically describes in his *Symposiacks*. Where he brings in *Porus* the God of Plenty feasting with the rest of the Gods : after Supper *Penia* comes a begging to the door ; *Porus* being drunk with Nectar, goes into Jupiters garden, and there falls asleep ; *Penia* observing it, steals to him, and by this deceit conceived by him. In this Fable of Plato, Origen takes notice what a near resemblance the garden of Jupiter hath to Paradise, *Penia* to the Serpent which circumvented Adam, and *Porus* to man who was deceived by the Serpent. Which he conceives more probable because of Plato his custom ; $\tau\omega$ $\mu\epsilon\gamma\alpha\lambda\alpha$ $\epsilon\upsilon\omega\tau\omega$ $\phi\alpha\iota\tau\epsilon\mu\epsilon\theta\epsilon\omega\alpha$ $\delta\epsilon\gamma\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$ $\chi\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\alpha\iota$ $\mu\eta\delta$ $\delta\iota\alpha$ $\tau\omega\delta$ $\mu\alpha\lambda\lambda\acute{o\varsigma$ $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ $\tau\eta$ $\tau\epsilon$ $\mu\acute{\upsilon\theta}\eta$ $\phi\alpha\iota\tau\epsilon\mu\epsilon\theta\epsilon\omega\alpha$, to wrap up those excellent things he knew under some fables because of the vulgar ; for which he after speaks

of

of his custome in *altering* and *disguising* what he had from the *Jews*, lest he should too much displease the *fabulous Greeks*, if he should adhere too close to the *Jews*, who were so infamous among them. Some have thought the *Story* of *Paradise* was preserved among the *Heathens* in the *fable* of the *gardens* of *Adonis*, which comes near that of *Eden*; but what footsteps may be gathered of the truth of Scripture history in the *Heathen Mythology*, will appear afterwards. Thus much here then may serve to have manifested the account which the Scripture gives of the *Origine* of *evil* by the fall of man to be in its self rational, and attested by the consent of such persons who cannot be suspected of any partiality to the Scriptures.

We come now to consider the other grand difficulty which concerns the *Origine* of *evil*, and the *truth* of *Divine providence* together. Which is, that if *sin* be the cause of *misery*, and there be a *God* which governs the world; *Whence comes it to pass, that the worst of men do so frequently escape sufferings, and the best do so commonly undergo them?* This hath been in all ages of the world, where men have been Philosophical and inquisitive, one of the great *inquiries* which the minds of men have been perplexed about. The true and full *resolution* of which question, depends much upon those *grounds* and *principles* which are discovered to us by *Divine revelation* in the *Scriptures*, concerning the *grounds* of *Gods* *patience* towards wicked men, the nature and end of *sufferings* which good men are exercised with. And certainly this should very much commend the *Scriptures* to all sober and inquisitive persons, that they contain in them the most clear and certain grounds of satisfaction to the minds of men, in such things, wherein they are otherwise so irresolved: But of that afterwards; Our present business is to give an account of this difficulty from *natural reason*, which will be most satisfactorily done by the producing those grounds, from which they have resolved this question, *cur malis bene, & bonis male*, who either have not had, or at least owned any thing of *Divine revelation*. I begin with that which doth concern the *prosperity* and *impunity* of *wicked men*, which men have with more confidence insisted on, on

§. 20.

this account, because all men could not but understand a general reason of sufferings, by reason there were none whose consciences could wholly acquit them of evil actions; but why persons notoriously wicked should live in impunity, when others suffer, that they were unable to give an account of. And this was the common pretence of *Atheism*, as *Simplicius* tells us, συμκαίνει ὃ τίνας καὶ διὰ τὸ ἀποδείκναι περὶ αὐτῶν.

Comment. καὶ διὰ τὸ δεῖν, πρὶ μὲν ἀγαθὸς δυσχῆρτας, πρὶ ὃ κακὸς ἐοῖται.
in Epictet. τοῖς εὐοφύτοις, ὁλερωθεὶν ὧν ἔχουσιν περὶ αὐτῶν, καὶ κατὰ διδόναι τῇ
α. 38. p. 223 στρατῶσι λέγειν,

Τολμῶ κατεπεῖν μὲν ποτ' ἔκ εἰς ἐν θεοί,
Κακοὶ δὲ εὐτυχῶντες ἐπιπλήθουν με.

It comes to pass, that such who have no grounded belief of a Deity, when they observe the miseries of good men, and the tranquillity and felicity of bad men, they regard not the common notion they have of a Deity, and are ready to cry out with the Tragadian (or rather of Aristophanes in his Plutus.)

*Shall I not dare to say there are no Gods,
When those do prosper who have injur'd me?*

And it is observable, that the most of those who have taken occasion among the *Heathens* to question providence, have done it upon some remarkable injury which they have conceived to be done to themselves; and so we have ground to think that it was more passion and interest, than any clear reason which was the inducement to it. So *Diogenes* resolves to set up for an *Atheist*, because the perjured person was not struck dead in the place.

And *Jason* in *Seneca*, when he sees *Medea* flye away after killing his children, cries out,

Testare, nullus esse quàm verberis Deus.

*Thou tell'st the world, there are no Gods that way
Where thou dost flye.*

And

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And so *Claudian*, who largely reasons the case on both sides, for Providence and against it; at last tells us what it was which was the main cause of his doubts: viz. the long impunity of *Rufinus*.

*Abstulit hunc tandem Rufini poena tumultum,
Absolvitque Deos.*

*Rufinus death doth clear the Gods, and set
My mind at ease.*

But because some carry it higher, as *Cotta* in *Tully*, who *Tull. l. 3. de Nat. Deor.* reasons the most (as became a *Statesman*) in reference to such persons who had been *useful* or *hurtful* to *Commonwealths*, we may suppose there might be somewhat more of *reason* than *interest* in such argumentations; and yet even in those *discourses* we may still find that the main original of this quarrel against *Providence* was an over-high esteem of themselves, that they thought they *deserved* better from the *Gods* than to receive such injuries, or undergo such calamities. Therefore *Cotta* cries out on *Providence*, because such persons who were *useful* to the *Roman Commonwealth*, were destroyed when the enemies to it escaped, as though *Providence* had been only a *Tutelar Deity* of *Rome*, and had nothing to do elsewhere. Thence he cries out, If there be *Providence*, why were the two *Scipio's* destroyed in *Spain* by the *Carthaginians*? Why was *Maximus* killed by *Hannibal*? Why were the *Romans* with *Paulus* ruined at *Canna*? Why did *Regulus* undergo so much cruelty by the *Carthaginians*? Why did not *Africanus* dye in his own bed? Nay, saith he, to come nearer home, Why is my Uncle *Rutilius* in banishment? Why was my friend *Drusus* killed in his own house? On the other side, Why did *Marinus* dye in peace, and the most cruel *Cinna* enjoy so long tranquillity & with many other instances of both sorts. But this is it which I take notice of these for, because we hereby see how common it is for men to question providence, more out of *Passion* and *Interest*, than out of any solid grounds of *reason*.

§. 12.

Let us therefore appeal from persons who were particularly engaged by some private interest in those passages, from whence they would infer that there was no providence, to such who stood by unconcerned, and made use of the free dictates of their reason in these cases. And such persons, when they come to reason the case like Philosophers, and men out of passion, have given satisfactory and rational accounts why God in his wise providence may sometimes suffer the worst of men, to go on in impunity, when good men may go thorow the troubles of this world. As,

Plutarch.
de his qui
secepani-
amur à nu-
mine. p.
350. ed. Fr.

1. God forbears wicked men, to propound the example of his goodness to their imitation, to teach them not to revenge their injuries too greedily on each other. This Plutarch, in that admirable discourse of his on this subject, insists on as his first reason, why God doth not presently punish wicked men. For, saith he out of Plato, God hath set forth himself in the midst of the world for our imitation; and true virtue is nothing else but an imitation of the Divine nature. And therefore God, saith Plato, gave men the use of sight, that by the sight of the heavenly bodies, and the exact motions which are in them, men should learn to δὲμον καὶ τιμωρίαν, that which was comely and orderly, and hate all disorderly and irregular motions; For as he excellently speaks: ἡ δὲ θεὸς, ἡ μείζων ἀνθρώπων ἀπολαύει τοῦ πόνου, ἢ τὸ μῦθος, καὶ δακτύλων ἐν ἐκείνῳ χαλῶν καὶ ἀγῶν ἐκ ἀγῶν καὶ λίσσαν. There is no greater benefit man can receive from God, than to attain true virtue by the imitation and pursuit of those perfections which are in him. And thence, saith Plutarch, God forbears to punish wicked men presently, not lest if he should punish them he might do that he would repent of afterwards, ἀλλ' ἵνα τὸ πρὸς τὰς τιμωρίας θυρώδες καὶ λαβρὸν ἀπαρῶν, but that he might take away the fury and violence of men in revenging their injuries on each other, that they should not do it in wrath and anger, with as much eagerness as they satisfy their hunger and thirst, whereby they do, ἐπιδύναντες τοὺς λαυπητῶν, leap upon them who have injured them, with as much fury as a wilde beast upon his prey; but men should learn to imitate τὴν ἐκείνου σεβόμεν καὶ μέδον, Gods gentleness and patience, whereby he gives the offender time to consider

consider with himself what he hath done, before he doth severely punish him. As *Plato* when his Boy had angred him, stood still a while without striking him, τὸ θυμὸν κολάζων, as he said, *punishing himself first for his anger*, before he would chastise the Boy for his fault; and *Archytas*, when he saw how negligent his workmen had been, and began to be very angry with them, told them, εὐτυχεῖτε ὅτι ὀργίζομαι ὑμῖν, *It is well for you that I am angry with you*. Now, saith *Plutarch*, if the consideration of this forbearance in men should tend to moderate mens heat and violence, how much more should the consideration of the lenity and patience of God do it! καὶ θεὸς ἡγεῖται ὡς εἰς ἀρετὴς τὴν περὶ τὴν μαλακότητα, and to account gentleness and forbearance to be an imitation of divine perfections. Now what can be more rational and agreeable to our apprehensions of a divine nature, than this is, that he should shew his goodness to all, and by his forbearance of so many, teach the world more meekness and gentleness towards each other? For if offences rise by the quality of the person against whom they are committed, no injuries can be so great in one man to another, as those affronts are men put upon God by their continual provocations of him: And if God then be of so infinite patience, to forbear such who have offended him, what justice and reason is there but that men should express more lenity and patience towards each other? So *Hierocles* excellently speaks, μὴ οἶδ' ὅτι καὶ τοῖς θείαις μέτροις ὁ θεὸς δεῖται μιμεῖσθαι ἀνθρώπων, τὸ τῆς εὐανθρωπίας ἀγαθὸν κοινὸν πᾶσι γένει πεποιμένων. *A good man imitates God in the measures of friendship, who hates no man, and extends his loving kindness to all mankind*. Of which, *Seneca* likewise somewhere speaks. Ne Deos quidem immortales ab hac tam effusa benignitate sacrilegi negligentisque eorum deterrent; utuntur natura sua, & cuncta, inter que illa, ipsos munerum suorum malos interpretes juvant. *The Divine Benignity extends its self to all, even to such as affront and dishonour them, and abuse the gifts they bestow upon them*. And since there is so much truth and reason in that of *Plato*, τίλθ' τὸν ἀγαθὸν τὸ ὁμοιόθυτον θεῷ, *It is the height of goodness to be like to God*; we see what excellent reason there is for that command of our Saviour,

Love

Luk. 6. 35. *Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the highest; for he is kind unto the unthankful, and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father is merciful.*

2. God forbears, presently to punish wicked men, to give them time to become better. This the same excellent Moralist gives as another account of Gods patience, that thereby Rev. 2. 21. he gives them *ἔτις ὥς ἐπιστρέψωμεν*, a space to repent as Plutarch. the Scripture calls it. For men, saith Plutarch, in their punishments look at nothing further than meer satisfying their revenge and malice, and that makes them pursue those that have offended them with so much rage and eagerness; but God, saith he, aims at the cure of those who are not utterly incurable. To such he gives, *μεταβαλὶς χρόνον*, a time to reform in. Here he brings in the examples of such who were bad at first, and came afterwards to be changed from what they were; for which he instanceth in *Cecrops*, who was thence called *Δεινός*, because from a cruel severe Prince, he became gentle and mild; and so *Geron* and *Hieron* of Sicily, and *Pisistratus* the Son of *Hippocrates*, who from being *Usurpers*, became excellent Princes. If *Miltiades*, saith he, had been cut off while he acted the part of a Tyrant, or *Cimon* in his Incest, or *Themistocles* in his debaucheries, what had become of *Marathon*, *Emrymedon*, *Dianium*, by which the Athenians got so great glory and liberty? and as he well observes, *ὅταν γὰρ αἱ μεγάλαι φύσεις μίανται ἐκφύρουν*, Great Spirits do nothing mean; *ὡς ἄρα δι' ἐξύτην τὸ σφοδρὸν ἐκ αὐτῆς καὶ δραστήριον*, which is so powerfully disposed that it is so vehement and active, *ὥστε οὐδέποτε ἵσταται*, That sharp and active spirit that is in them can never lye at rest by reason of its vigour, but they are tossed up and down, as it were in a Tempest, till they come to a settled composed life. But as the multitudes of weeds argues the richness and softness of the ground, though for the sake of those weeds one not skilful in husbandry would not account such ground worth looking after; so, saith he, *αὐτοὶ πολλὰ καὶ φθύλα προσεξαιδοῖσιν αἱ μεγάλαι φύσεις*; Great spirits usually bring forth no commendable fruits at first; which we considering the danger and hurtfulness of, are presently full

cutting them down; but one that more wisely considers the generous nature which may lie under this ill fruit, waits time and leisure, till reason and age begins to master these head-strong passions. And therefore according to the prudent Law of the Egyptians, the woman with child must be reprieved till the time of her delivery.

3. God spares some wicked men from punishment, to make them instruments of his justice in punishing others. Εἰς αὐτοὺς καὶ κολασαῖς ἐπὶ τῶν πονηρῶν, ὅτι δι' αὐτοὺς ἀποκρίνεται τὸ δαιμόνιον, as Plutarch goes on, God spares some from punishment that by them he might punish others. Which he supposeth to be the case of all Tyrants; and thereby Cotta's difficulty concerning Marius, Cinna, Sylla and those other cruel and Tyrannical persons, who had usurped authority among them, is clearly taken off: For Divine Providence might let those trees grow from whence he intended to take his rods to scourge others with all. God makes the same use of Tyrants (saith Plutarch) to Common wealths, that Physicians do of the gall of a Hyana and other hurtful creatures, which may be good for curing some dangerous diseases; so may the Tyrannical severity and sharpness of such persons be continued ἕως τοῦ αὐτῶν ἀπαλλάξαι καὶ ἐκδέχεσθαι, till the diseases of the Political body be cured by these sharp Medicines. Such a one was Phalaris to the Agrigentines, and Marius to the Romans; and the Oracle told the Sicyonians in express terms, μισοῦσθαι τοὺς ἄνδρες τὴν πόλιν; the City wanted some severe discipline. Thence Tostatus, when he found what strange success he had in his enterprises, called himself Flagellum Dei, and thought God raised him up on purpose to be a scourge for the sins of the world. And no doubt those strange passages of the Roman Common wealth (which made Caro at least dispute providence, and say res divinae multum habere caliginis; when he saw Pompey successful as long as he served his ambition, but presently overthrown when he stood for the Common wealth) these things, I say, had a higher end than they looked at, which was to make both Pompey and Caesar the instruments of Divine justice to punish the Romans for their lusts, ambition and cruelty, which were never greater then in that age. Now then if God may justly punish offenders,

why may he not spare some to make them his instruments in the punishing of others, especially since after he hath used his rods he may cast them into the fire too? as was evident in the instance of *Cæsar*, who after all his slaughters and triumphs was murdered in the *Senate*, and that by some who had been as active as any for him. And herein divine justice, both as to the punishment of the persons and the means of it, hath been very remarkable in multitudes of instances, which every one reading may afford him.

4. Therefore, another account why *God* may spare wicked men a great while, is, That divine providence might more remarkably be observed in the manner of their punishment afterwards. *Plutarch* tells us of *Callippus*, who was stabd by his enemies with the same Dagger with which he had kild *Dion* under a pretence of friendship. And when *Mitius* the *Argive* was kild in a tumult, afterwards, upon the day of a solemn shew, a brass statue in the market place fell upon his murderer and kild him there. But most remarkable is the story of *Belsus* recorded by the same author, who having kild his Father and a long time concealed it, goes one night to supper to some Friends, and while he was there, thrusts up his spear into a swallows nest and pulls it down and kills the young ones; his Friends asking him the reason of so strange an action: ἡ δ' (ἔφη) με πάλαι καταμα(νῆσαι αὐτῶν) ἰδούσιν; ἔκταβωπον, ὡς ἀπὸ λόνιτος; καὶ περὶ αὐτῶν; Do not you hear, saith he, how they falsely accuse me, and cry out that I have kild my Father? Which being by the persons present carried to the King, and the truth of it found out, he was executed for it. Such strange wayes doth providence sometimes use to shew how vigilant it is, even when we think it sleeps the most.

5. Though *God* spares the persons of wicked men, he doth not defer their punishment, when the thoughts of their evil actions is the greatest torment to them; *Maxima peccati pana est, peccasse*, as *Seneca* speaks. Sin bears its own punishment along with it. Wickedness is its self the most exquisite contriver of misery, which fills the minds of those who commit it with continual consternations, anxieties and perplexities of mind. But as that
often

Ch. 3. *The Divine Authority of the Scriptures asserted.* 327

often and deservedly cited author on this subject, *Plutarch* tells us, most men are in this like *Children*, who when they behold malefactors in the *Theatres* in their cloth of gold and purple robes, with their crowns on their heads dancing about, they admire them, and imagine them to be most happy men, till they see them *lashed* and *beaten*, and fire come out from their brave apparel; so saith he, as long as men see others in their pomp and grandeur, they think them far from punishment, till they behold their *execution*, which, saith he, is not so much the *entrance* of their punishment as the *perfection* of it. So that the *longer* the *time* of their *lives* is, the longer is the *time* of their *punishment* here, ἡ δὲ γυναικὶς ἐκολάσθων, διὰ γυνήσων κολαζόμενοι; they are not punished when they grow old, but they are grown old in punishments. Cannot we say, a person is punished while he is in prison and hath his fetters upon him, till his execution comes? nor that one that hath drunk poison, is a dying while he walks about till the cold comes to his heart and kills him? If we deny, saith he, that all the inquietudes, horrors and anxieties of mind which wicked men have, are no part of their punishment, we may as well say that a fish which hath swallowed the hook is not taken, because he is not fried, or cut in pieces. So it is with every wicked man, he hath swallowed the hook when he hath committed an evil action (τὸ γλυκὺ τὸ ἀδικία ὥστε δέλεαρ αὐτοῦ ἐξελθόντα) and his conscience within him, as he expresseth it,

Θυμὸς βολαίῃ πύλῃ ὡς διασπένει.

Which in the Prophets expression is, the wicked are like a troubled sea which casts forth nothing but mire and dirt. As *Apollodorus* dreamt, that he was fied, and boyled by the *Scythians*, and that his heart spake to him out of the Cauldron, Ἐγὼ σὺ τέτων αἰτία, I am the cause of all this. God deals by wicked men as *Culigula* was wont to say of those he commanded to be executed, *ferit ut sentiant se mori*; he so punishes them as to make them sensible of their punishments. And as *Tacitus* speaks of cruel and wicked persons, *quorum mentes si recludantur, possint aspici laniatus* &c. *ἐκτεταται*

quando ut corpora verberibus, ita savitia, libidine, malis consultiis animus dilaceretur. Wickedness is the only fury which continually haunts and lashes those who delight in it, and leaves still behind it *ατοχὰ καὶ φοβερά τιμή* loathsome and terrible perturbations, secret gripings of conscience and self-condemning thoughts for their folly and wickedness; like *Lyfimachus*, who for extreame thirst offered his Kingdom to the *Geta* to quench it, which when he had done, *ὅς τ' ἦν κακὸς, ὅς δ' ἠδ' ἡσυχίαν ἔμελλεν ἔχειν*, *ἐκτενέως βασανίσας τὸν βασιλέα*. What a wretch was I (saith he) to lose such a Kingdom for so short a pleasure! And though wicked men be not sensible of the loils of a far more glorious Kingdom then this of *Lyfimachus*, viz. that of heaven, yet they cannot but be sensible how much they have lost that Kingdom which every good man hath in the tranquillity of his spirit, and the command of his passions.

6. The time that God spares wicked men, is not so long as we think for. It is all one, as *Plutarch* saith, as if we should complain, that the malefactor was punished in the evening and not in the morning; Gods forbearance is but for a very little time, compared with his own duration. We measure God by the short hour-glass of our own time, when we are so ready to confine him to our measures. The time seems long to us, but it is as nothing in its self: *ὅτι τοῖς τοῖς θεοῖς οὐδὲν αἰσχροῦ ἐστὶν ἀδελφεία, τὸ μόνον ἐστὶν*. The whole life of man compared with eternity is nothing. Besides, all this time God suffers wicked men to live here, he hath them under safe custody; he doth but let them take the air within the prison-walls; or it may be they may play and sport themselves there, but there is no possibility of escaping out of the hands of Divine justice.

7. God forbears wicked men here, because the time is to come wherein God intends to punish them. This is the highest vindication of Divine Providence as to the present impunity of wicked men in the world, because this is not the proper season for the open execution of Justice. There are but few in comparison whom Justice causeth to be executed in the prison, of what are reserved for the general Assizes; God relieves them for a fair and open tryal, for the greater vindication

dication of his *honour* and manifestation of his *justice* to the world. And although *Gods judgements* even in this world be sometimes so remarkable, that we cannot but see a hand of *Providence* in them, yet they are but few whom *God* doth so remarkably punish here to make us more firmly believe a day of judgement to come. Which though it be most clearly and fully revealed in *Scripture*, yet the *Heathens* themselves from meer *reason* have had such a *persuasion* of it, that they have given this as another great reason, why *God* did forbear to punish wicked men here, because he did reserve them for future punishment. For as the same *Moralist* speaks in the same discourse concerning the soul,

αὐτὴς ὅς ἐστις ἀθανάτη καὶ βίον, ὅταν δὲ διακρίνηται τὴν ψυχὴν τῆς αἰσχροσύνης, *This present life is the place of the souls combat, which when it hath finished, is then receives according to its performance of it.* And as he before speaks, οἱ δὲ λόγοι οὗτοι οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλοι ἢ οἱ λόγοι αἱμα καὶ διακρίνει τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην ψυχὴν βελούτων; καὶ δαπέδον ἢ ἐπὶ ἀποκρίσει, ἀμάρτυρα δαπέδον. *The same reason which confirms providence, doth likewise confirm the immortality of the soul; and if one be taken away, the other follows.*

Οὐ γὰρ ὅς τῷ Ψυχῇ μὲν πῶτε τελευτῶν, μᾶλλον οὐκ ἔστι καὶ πῶτε ἀποκρίσει καὶ τιμωρίας. *And if the soul doth subsist after death, it stands to the greatest reason that it should there receive either reward or punishment.* Thus we see how far natural light and moral reason will carry men in the vindicating *Divine Providence* as to the present impunity of wicked men.

The other part which concerns the *sufferings* of good men is not of so great difficulty, because there are none so good as not to have a mixture of evil in them, and as they have a mixture of evil, so they have but a mixture of punishment; none lying under so great miseries here but withall they have some share in the comforts of this life. And therefore it is less wonder, that this part of *Divine Providence* which concerns the sufferings of good men, hath not wanted some among the *Heathen Moralists* who have made it their design to vindicate it; which setting aside what *Simplicius* on *Epicetus* and many others have done, is fully performed by *Seneca* in his tract on this very subject, *Cur bonia male sit, cum sit Providentia*, (as *Muretus* restores the title of that

§. 22.

Senec de
Provid. c. 1.

book) wherein these following accounts are given of it.

1. God brings them up as his children under sharp discipline for their future benefit. A good man in Seneca's language, is, *discipulus Dei, amulatorque, & vera progenies*: which in the language of the Scripture is one taught of God, a follower of God, and one born of him. Now saith he, *Patens ille magnificus, virtutum non lenis exactor, sicut severi patres, durius educat.* God who is the great Father of good men, keeps them under discipline while under age, and by hardship fits them for the practice of virtue. Thence he bids us take notice of the different indulgence of Fathers and Mothers to their Children; the Father he hastens them to school, suffers them not to be idle on their playdayes, makes them toyle and sometimes cry; the Mother she is all for holding them in her lap, keeping them out of the Sun, and from catching cold, would not willingly have them either cry or take pains. *Patrium habet Deus adversus bonos animum, & illos fortius amat.* God bears the indulgence of a Father towards his children and loves them with greater severity.

2. Good men receive benefit by their sufferings; *Quicquid evenit in suum colorem trahit*, saith Seneca of a good man, which in the language of the Apostle is, Every thing works together for his good. The sea loseth nothing, saith he, of its saltness by the rivers running into it, neither doth a good man by the current of his sufferings. And of all benefits which he receives, that of the exercise and tryal of his virtue and patience is most discernable. *Marcet sine adversario virtus*; as soon as Carthage was destroyed, Rome fell to Luxury: True wrestlers desire to have some to try their strength upon them; *Cui non industria etiam pœna est?* An active spirit hates idleness and cowardise; for *etiamsi ceciderit, de genu pugnabit*, though his legs be cut off, he will fight on his knees.

3. It redounds to Gods honour when good men bear up under sufferings. *Ecce par Deo dignum, vir fortis cum mala fortuna composuit.* It is a spectacle God delights to see, a good man combat with calamities. God doth in Seneca's phrase *quosdam fastidio transire*, passeth them by in a slight; an old wrestler scorns to contend with a coward, one who is *vinci parat*,

us, ready to yield up presently. *Calamitates sub jugum miseri proprium magni viri est*, It argues a noble spirit to be able to subdue miseries.

4. It tends to the tryal and increase of their strength. Seneca highly extols that speech of the Philosopher Demetrius, *Nihil infelicius eo cui nihil unquam evenit adversi; non licuit enim illi se experiri*. He is the most unhappy man who never knew what misery meant; for he could never know what he was able to bear. And, as he saith, to pass ones life away *sine morfu animi*, without any trouble, it is *ignorare rerum naturam alteram partem*, not to know what is upon the reverse of nature. *Idem licet fecerint qui integri revertuntur ex acie, magis spectatur qui sancius redit*. Though he that comes home sound might fight as well as he that is wounded, yet the wounded person hath the more pitty, and is most cryed up for his valour. The Pilot is seen in a tempest, a Souldier in battel, and a good man in sufferings. God doth by such, as Masters do by Scholars, *qui plus laboris ab his exigunt, quibus certior spes est*: who set the best wits the hardest tasks.

5. God exerciseth good men with sufferings, to discover the indifferency of those things which men value so much in the world, when he denyes them to good men. Blindness would be hateful, if none were blind but such whose eyes were put out, and therefore Appian and Metellus were blind. Riches are no good things, therefore the worst as well as the best have them. *Nullo modo magis potest Deus concupita traducere, quam si illa ad turpissimos deferret, ab optimis abigit*. God could not traduce or defame those things more which men desire so much, then by taking them away from the best of men, and giving them to the worst.

6. That they might be examples to others of patience and constancy; For as Seneca concludes, *nati sunt in exemplar*, they are born to be patterns to others. If to these things we add what the Word of God discovers concerning the nature, grounds, and ends of afflictions, and that glory which shall be revealed, in comparison with which exceeding weight of glory these light and momentary afflictions are not at all to be valued, then we have a clear and full vindication of Divine Providence,

Providence, as to the sufferings of good men, as well as to the Impunity of such as are wicked. But however from hence we see how far the meer light of reason hath carryed men in resolving these difficulties concerning Gods Providence in the world, and what a rational account may be given of them, supposing evil of punishment to arise from sin, and that there is a God in the world, who is ready to punish the wicked and to reward the good: Which was the thing to be shewed.

CHAP.

16

CHAP. IV.

Of the Origine of Nations.

All mankind derived from Adam, if the Scriptures be true. The contrary supposition an introduction to Atheism. The truth of the history of the flood. The possibility of an universal deluge proved. The flood universal as to mankind, whether universal as to the earth and animals; no necessity of asserting either. Yet supposing the possibility of it demonstrated without creation of new waters. Of the fountains of the deep. The proportion which the height of mountains bears to the Diameter of the earth. No mountains much above three mile perpendicular. Of the origine of fountains. The opinion of Aristotle and others concerning it, discussed. The true account of them from the vapours arising from the mass of subterraneous waters. Of the capacity of the Ark for receiving the Animals from Buteo and others. The truth of the Deluge from the Testimony of Heathen Nations. Of the propagation of Nations from Noahs posterity. Of the beginning of the Assyrian Empire. The multiplication of mankind after the flood. Of the Chronology of the LXX. Of the time between the flood and Abraham, and the advantages of it. Of the pretence of such Nations, who called themselves Aborigines. A discourse concerning the first plantation of Greece, the common opinion propounded and rejected. The Hellens not the first Inhabitants of Greece, but the Pelasgi. The large spread of them over the parts of Greece; Of their language different from the Greeks. Whence these Pelasgi came; that Phaleg was the Pelasgus of Greece, and the leader of that Colony proved from Epiphanius: the language of the Pelasgi in Greece, Oriental: thence an account given of the many Hebrew words in the Greek language, and the remainders of the Eastern languages in the Islands of Greece, both which not from the Phœnicians as Bochartus thinks, but from the old Pelasgi. Of the ground of the affinity between the Jews and Lacedæmonians. Of the peopling of America.

THE next thing we proceed to give a rational account of, in the history of the first ages of the world contained

§. I.

Yyy

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rained in *Scripture*, is the peopling of the World from *Adam*. Which is of great consequence for us to understand, not only for the satisfaction of our curiosity as to the true *Origine* of *Nations*, but also in order to our believing the truth of the *Scriptures*, and the universal effects of the fall of man. Neither of which can be sufficiently cleared without this. For, as it is hard to conceive how the effects of mans fall should extend to all mankind, unless all mankind were propagated from *Adam*; so, it is unconceivable how the account of things given in *Scripture* should be true, if there were persons existent in the World long before *Adam* was. Since the *Scripture* doth so plainly affirm, that

Act. 17. 26. *God hath made of one blood all Nations of men, for to dwell on the face of the earth*: Some *Greek* copies read it $\epsilon\zeta\ \iota\upsilon\delta\epsilon$, leaving out $\alpha\iota\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$ which the *vulgar Latin* follows: the *Arabick* version to explain both, reads it *ex homine*, or as *de Dieu* renders it *ex Adamo uno*, there being but the difference of one letter in the *Eastern language* between אדם and דמים , the one denoting *blood*, and the other *man*. But if we take it as our more ordinary copies read it $\epsilon\zeta\ \iota\upsilon\delta\epsilon\ \alpha\iota\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$, yet thereby it is plain, that the meaning is not, that all mankind was made of the same uniform matter, as the author of the *Præ-Adamites* weakly imagined (for by that reason, not only mankind, but the whole World might be said to be $\epsilon\zeta\ \iota\upsilon\delta\epsilon\ \alpha\iota\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$ of the same blood, since all things in the World were at first formed out of the same matter) but $\alpha\iota\mu\alpha$ is taken there in the sense in which it occurs in the best *Greek* Authors for the stock out of which men come: So *Homer*,

Odys. 7.

$\text{Εἰς τὸν γ' ἰμῶσιναι} \epsilon\zeta\ \alpha\iota\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma\ \eta\mu\alpha\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$

Thence those who are near relations, are called in *Sophocles*, $\text{ἰμῶσιναι} \alpha\iota\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$; thence the name of *Consanguinity* for nearness of relation; and *Virgil* useth *sanguis* in the same sense.

Trojano à sanguine duci.

So that the *Apostles* meaning is, that however men now are,

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So dispersed in their habitations, and differ so much in language and custom from each other, yet they all were originally of the same stock, and did derive their succession from that first man whom God created. Neither can it be conceived on what account Adam in the Scriptures is called the first man, and that he was made a living soul, and of the earth; earthy; unless it were to denote that he was absolutely the first of his kind, and so was to be the standard and measure of all that follows. And when our Saviour would reduce all things to the beginning, he instanceth in those words which were pronounced after Eve was formed, *But from the beginning of the Creation God made them male and female; for this cause shall a man leave Father and Mother and cleave unto his Wife.* Now nothing can be more plain and easie then from hence to argue this; those of whom those words were spoken, were the first male and female which were made in the beginning of the Creation; but it is evident these words were spoken of Adam and Eve: And Adam said, *this is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: therefore shall a man leave his Father and his Mother and shall cleave unto his Wife.* If the Scripture then of the New Testament be true, it is most plain and evident that all mankind is descended from Adam; and no less conspicuous is it from the history of the Creation as delivered by Moses.

For how necessary had it been for Moses, when he was giving an account of the *Origine of things*, to have discovered by whom the World was first planted, if there had been any such plantation before Adam; but to say, that all the design of Moses was only to give an account of the *Origine* and history of the Jewish Nation, and that Adam was only the first of that stock, is manifestly ridiculous, it being so clear, that not only from Adam and Noah, but from Sem, Abraham, and Isaac came other Nations besides that of the Jews. And by the same reason that it is said, that Moses only speaks of the *Origine* of the Jewish Nation in the history of Adam, it may as well be said, that Moses speaks only of the making of Canaan, and that part of the heavens which was over it, when he describes the Creation of the world in the six dayes work. For, why may not the earth in

the second ver. of *Genesis* be as well understood of the *Land of Judea*; and the light, and production of *animals* and *vegetables* referr only to that, as to understand it so in reference to the *flood*, and in many other passages relating to those eldest times? But the *Author* of that *Hypothesis* answers, *That the first Chapter of Genesis may relate to the true Origin of the world and the first peopling of it, but in the second, Moses begins to give an account of the first man and woman of the Jewish Nation.* Very probable! but, if this be not a putting asunder those which *God* hath joyned together, nothing is. For, doth not *Moses* plainly at first give an account of the formation of *things* in the first six dayes, and of his rest on the *seventh*? but, how could he be said to have rested then from the *works* of *Creation*, if after this followed the formation of *Adam* and *Eve* in the second Chapter? Besides, if the forming of man mentioned, *Gen. 2. 7.* be distinct from that mentioned, *Gen. 1. 27.* then by all parity of reason, חולרות השמים והארץ the *Generations of Heaven and Earth* mentioned, *Gen. 2. 4.* must be distinct from the *Creation of the heaven and earth* mentioned, *Gen. 1. 1.* And so if there were another *Creation* of *heaven* and *earth* belonging to the *Jews* in *Gen. 2.* we may likewise believe that there was a new *Creation* of *man* and *woman* in that Chapter, distinct from that mentioned in the former. Again further, if there had been any such persons in the world before *Adam*, no doubt *Adam* himself was ignorant of them; or else it had been a false and ridiculous account which he gives of the name of his wife חוה because she was סכלרית the mother of all living. Not of all living things, for that had been a more proper description of a *Ceres*, or *Magna Mater*, or *Diana multimammia*, of our Grand-mother the earth, but certainly it extends to all of the kind, that all living creatures that are of humane nature came from her. So, the *Chaldee Paraphrast* understands it, she was called *Hava*, because she was אמה רבכל בני אנוש the mother of all the sons of men. And so the *Arabick version*, quia ipsa fuit mater omnis viventis rationalis. To which purpose our Learned *Selden* cites the version of the *Manri-l. 1. c. 5. p. 65* *Iranian Jews*, and the *Persick* of *Tawafim*.

*Selden, de
jure natur.
& Gent.*

But

But what ever the credit or authority of these *versions* be, this is most certain, that *Adam* had no reason at all to have given this name to his *wife*, as being the mother of all living, if there had been any of mankind existing in the world from other mothers, which had been long before *Eve* was formed. So that we find it plain and clear, that if the report given of things in *Scripture* be true, the *Hypothesis* of *Pre-Adamites* is undoubtedly false. And certainly, who ever seriously consider the frequent reflections on the authority of the *Scriptures* which were cast by the author of that *Fiction*, and his endeavouring on all occasions to derogate from the miracles recorded in it, may easily suspect the design of that *Author* was not to gain any credit to his opinion from those arguments from *Scripture*, which he makes shew of (which are pitiably weak and ridiculous) but having by the help of such arguments made his opinion more plausible, his hope was that his opinion would in time undermine the *Scriptures* themselves. When he had made it appear that the account given in the *Scriptures* of the plantation of the World was unsatisfactory, since there were men before *Adam*, which the *Scriptures* to please the *Jewish Nation*, take no notice of. So that after he had attempted to prostitute the *Scriptures* to his opinion, his next work had been to have turned them out of doors, as not of credit to be relied on by any when they were so common to every opinion. But how impious, absurd and rude that attempt was upon the sacred and inviolable authority of the *Scriptures*, hath been so fully discovered by his very many not unlearned adversaries, that it might seem needless so much as to have taken notice of so weakly grounded, and infirmly proved an opinion, had it not thus far lain in my way in order to the clearing the true *Origin of Nations* according to the *Scriptures*. The main foundations of which fabulous opinion lying chiefly in the pretended antiquities of the *Chaldeans*, *Egyptians*, and others, have been fully taken away in our first book, where our whole design was to manifest the want of credibility in those accounts of ancient times, which are delivered by *Heathen Nations* in opposition to the *Scriptures*. There is nothing at all in *Scripture* from the *Crea-*

tion of *Adam* to the *flood* which seems to give any countenance to that *figment*, but only what may be easily resolved from the consideration of the great conciseness of the *Mosaic History*, in reporting that long interval of time which was between the fall of *Adam*, and the *Flood*; By means of which conciseness such things are reported as speedily done, because immediately succeeding in the story, which asked a very considerable time before they could be effected; and besides all things which were done before the *Flood*, being all quite obliterated by it, and all the numerous posterity of *Adam* being then destroyed (only *Noah* and his Family excepted) to what purpose had it been any further to have reported the passages before the *Flood*, otherwise then thereby to let us understand the certainty of the succession of persons from *Adam*, and such actions in those times which might be remarkable discoveries of *Gods Providence* and mans wickedness in it, which being most apparent at first in *Cain* and his posterity, did by degrees so spread its self over the face of the then inhabited World, that the just God was thereby provoked to send a *Deluge* among them to sweep away the present inhabitants to make room for another Generation to succeed them.

- §. 3. This therefore we now come to consider, viz. the History of the *Flood*, and the certainty of the propagation of the world from the posterity of *Noah* after the *Flood*. I begin with the History of the *Flood* its self, as to which, two things will be sufficient to demonstrate the truth of it. 1. If there be nothing in it repugnant to reason. 2. If we have sufficient evidence of the truth of it, from such who yet have not believed the Scriptures. There are only two things which seem questionable to reason concerning the *Flood*; the first, is, concerning the possibility of the *Flood* its self; the other is, concerning the capacity of the *Ark* for preserving all kinds of Animals. The only ground of questioning the possibility of such a *Flood*, as that is related in Scripture, hath been from hence, that some have supposed it impossible, that all the water which is contained in the *ayr*, supposing it to fall down should raise the surface of water upon the earth a foot and a half in height; so, that either new waters must be created to over-

overflow the earth, or else there must be supposed a rarefaction of the water contained in the Sea and all Rivers, so that it must take up at least fifteen times the space that now it doth; but then, they say, if the water had been thus rarified, it could neither have destroyed man nor beast, neither could Noahs Ark have been born up by it any more then by liquid *ayre*. To this therefore, I answer,

First, I cannot see any urgent necessity from the Scripture to assert, that the Flood did spread it self over all the surface of the earth. That all mankind (those in the Ark excepted) were destroyed by it, is most certain according to the Scriptures. When the occasion of the Flood is thus expressed, *And God saw that the wickedness of man was great upon earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth.* It could not be then any particular deluge of so small a Countrey as *Palestine*, which is here expressed, as some have ridiculously imagined; for, we find an universal corruption in the earth mentioned as the cause; an universal threatening upon all men for this cause; and, afterwards an universal destruction expressed, as the effect of this Flood. And all *flsh* dyed that moved upon the earth, and every man. *And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man and cattel, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the Heaven, and they were destroyed from the earth, and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the Ark.* So then it is evident that the Flood was universal as to mankind, but from thence follows no necessity at all of asserting the universality of it as to the *Globe* of the earth, unless it be sufficiently proved that the whole earth was peopled before the Flood: which I despair of ever seeing proved. And what reason can there be to extend the Flood beyond the occasion of it, which was the corruption of mankind? And it seems very strange that in so short an Interval, in comparison as that was from Adam to the flood, according to the ordinary computation, viz. 1656 years, and not much above two thousand, according to the largest, the world should then be fully peopled, when in to much

Gen. 6:5,7.

Gen. 7:13.

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much longer a *space of time* since the *flood* to this day, the earth is capable of receiving far more *Inhabitants*, then now it hath. The only probability then left for asserting the *universality* of the *Flood*, as to the *Globe* of the earth, is from the destruction of all *living creatures* together with *man*; now though men might not have spread themselves over the whole *surface* of the earth, yet *beasts* and *creeping things* might which were all destroyed with the *Flood*: For it is said, *That all flesh dyed that moved upon the earth, both of fowl and of cattel, and of beasts, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man.* To what end should there be not only a note of universality added, but such a particular enumeration of the several *kinds* of *beasts*, *creeping things*, and *fowls* if they were not all destroyed? To this I answer: I grant, as far as the *Flood* extended, all these were destroyed; but I see no reason to extend the *destruction* of these beyond that *compass* and *space* of earth where men inhabited: Because the punishment upon the *beasts* was occasioned by, and could not but be *concomitant* with the *destruction* of *mankind*, but (the occasion of the *deluge* being the *sin* of *man*, who was punished in the *beasts*; that were destroyed for his sake, as well as in himself) where the occasion was not, as where there were *animals*, and no men, there seems no necessity of extending the *Flood* thither. But to what end then it will be replied, did God command Noah with so much care to take of all kind of *beasts*, and *birds*, and *creeping things* into the *Ark* with him, if all these *living creatures* were not destroyed by the *Flood*? I answer, because all those things were destroyed where ever the *Flood* was; suppose then the whole *Continent* of *Asia* was peopled before the *Flood*, which is as much as we may in reason suppose, I say, all the *living creatures* in that *Continent* were all destroyed; or, if we may suppose it to have extended over our whole *Continent* of the *anciently known world*; what reason would there be that in the opposite part of the *Globe*; viz. *America*, which we suppose to be unpeopled then, all the *living creatures* should there be destroyed because men had sinned in this? And would there not on this supposition have been a sufficient reason

reason to preserve *living Creatures* in the *Ark* for *future propagation*, when all other *living creatures* extant had been in such remote places as would not have been accessible by them in many generations, and those *beasts* growing wilde for want of *Inhabitants*, would not have proved presently serviceable for the use of men after the *Flood*? which was certainly the main thing looked at in the preservation of them in the *ark*, that men might have all of them ready for their use presently after the *Flood*, which could not have been, had not the several kinds been preserved in the *Ark*, although we suppose them not destroyed in all parts of the world.

All this proceeds on supposition that *Animals* were propagated much further in the world then men were, before the *Flood*. Which I confess seems very probable to me, on this account; because the production of *Animals* is parallel in *Genesis* with that of *Fishes*, and both of them different from man; For God said, *Let the waters bring forth every moving creature that hath life; viz. Fish, and Fowl;* and accordingly it is said, *that the waters brought forth abundantly every living creature after their kind, and every Fowl after his kind.* Accordingly in the production of *beasts*, we read, *Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattel, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind, and it was so:* But in the production of man, it is said, *Let us make man in our own likeness.* From hence I observe this difference between the production of *animals*, and of *man*, that in the one God gave a *prolifick power* to the earth and waters for production of the several *living creatures* which came from them; so that the *seminal principles* of them were contained in the *matter* out of which they were produced, which was otherwise in *man*, who was made by a peculiar hand of the great *Creator* himself, who thence is said to have *formed Man of the dust of the ground.* Now therefore although there were but one *Male* and *Female* of mankind at first, which had a special formation by God himself; yet there is no reason we should conceive it to be so as to the production of other *living creatures*, whether *Fish*, or *Fowl*, or *Beasts*; but the *prolifick* virtue being

§. 4.

Gen. 1. 20.
21.

Vcr. 24.

Vcr. 26.

Gen. 2. 6.

ing by *Gods* power given to that *material principle* out of which they were formed, it may very well be supposed that many of the same kind were at first produced. For it seems very strange to imagine that in the whole *Ocean* there should be only *two* of a kind produced; but *Fish* and *Fowl* both arising from the *water*, we may have just reason to think, that the *waters* being separated before this *prolifick virtue* was communicated to the whole *mass* of *waters*, might in the several *parts* of the *globe* of the earth, bring forth both *fish* and *fowl* after their kinds. The same I say of the production of *Animals* in the sixth days work, which are ranked into three sorts, *Cattel*, *Creeping things*, and *Beasts* of the earth after their kinds; now *God* laying, *Let the earth bring forth her living creatures* (and that after the waters had divided some parts of the earth from other, so that there could be no passage for the cattel, creeping things, and beasts out of one part into another, without the help of man) it seems very probable that at least those parts of the earth which were thus divided from each other, did bring forth these several living creatures after their kinds, which did after propagate in those parts without being brought thither by the help of man. If now this *supposition* be embraced, by it we presently clear our selves of many *difficulties* concerning the *propagation* of *animals* in the world, and their conservation in the *Ark*, which many have been so much to seek for satisfaction in. As how the unknown kind of *Serpents* in *Brasil*, the *slow-bellied* creature of the *Indies*, and all those strange *species* of *animals* seen in the *West Indies* should either come into the *Ark* of *Noah*, or be conveyed out of it into those *Countries* which are divided from that *Continent* where the Flood was by so vast an *Ocean* on the one side, and at least so large a tract of *Land* on the other (supposing any passage but of one *Continent* into another, which yet hath not been discovered.) Besides some kind of *Animals* cannot live out of that particular *Clime* wherein they are; and there are many sorts of *animals* discovered in *America*, and the adjoining *Islands*, which have left no *remainders* of themselves in these parts of the world. And it seems very strange that these

these should propagate into those remote parts of the world from the place of the Flood, and leave none at all of their number behind them in those parts from whence they were propagated. These things at least make that opinion very probable which extends the production of animals beyond that of mankind in the old world, and that the Flood though it destroyed all mankind, and every living creature within that compass wherein mankind inhabited, yet might not extend its self to those parts, and the animals therein, in which men had never inhabited. And by this means we need not make so many miracles as some are said to do about the flood; and all those difficulties concerning the propagation of animals do of themselves vanish and fall to the ground. This is the first way of resolving the difficulty concerning the possibility of the Flood, by asserting it not to have been over the whole globe of the earth, but only over those parts where mankind inhabited.

Secondly, Suppose the Flood to have been over the whole globe of the earth, yet there might have been water enough to have overwhelmed it to the height mentioned in Scripture. For which we are to consider that many causes concurred to the making of this Deluge; first, the air was condensed into clouds, and those fell down with continued force and violence, not breaking into drops, but all in a body (which Sir Walter Rawleigh parallels with the spouts of the *Hist. of the West Indies*) which are thence called the *Cataracts* or *World*. 1. 2. *Flood gates* of heaven, God loosening (as he expresseth it) c. 7. *sett*. 6. the power retentive which was in the clouds, and so the waters must needs fall in abundance, according to the expression in *Job*, *Behold he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up, also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.* Job 12. 15. Now, I say, although these waters falling down with so much fury and violence, as well as in so great abundance, might quickly destroy all living creatures; yet this was not all, for God who held in the Ocean within its bounds, whereby he saith to it, *Thus far it shall go, and no farther,* might then give it Commission to execute his justice upon the sinful world: and to all this, we have another cause of the Deluge, which was, *That the Fountains of the great*

Gen. 7. 11. *Deep were broken up.* By which *Vatablus*, most probably understands, *Immensam illam & profundam aquarum copiam qua est subter terram* : That vast body of waters which lies in the bowels of the earth; now when all these fountains were broken up, and the waters within the earth rush out with violence and impetuosity upon it, it must needs cause an inundation so great as that is mentioned in the Scripture. For as that judicious Historian Sir *W. Rawleigh* observes, Let us consider that the earth had above 21000 miles compass, the Diameter of the earth according to that Circle 7000 mile, and then from the Superficies to the Center, 3500 mile; take then the highest mountain of the world, *Caucasus, Taurus, Tenariff*, or any other, and I do not find, saith he, that the height exceeds thirty miles in height: It is not then impossible, answering reason with reason, that all those waters mixed within the earth, 3500 miles deep, should be able to cover the space of 30 miles in height, which 30 miles upright being found in the depths of the earth 116 times; for the fountains of the great Deep were broken, and the waters drawn out of the bowels of the earth. But then withall, saith he, if we consider the proportion which the earth bears to the air about it, we may easily understand the possibility of the Flood, without any new Creation of waters; for supposing so much air to be condensed, and so turned into water which doth encompass the earth, it will not seem strange to men of judgement, yea but of ordinary understanding, that the earth (God so pleasing) was covered over with waters, without any new Creation. But this will yet appear more probable if the height of the highest mountains doth bear no greater a proportion to the Diameter of the earth, then of the 1670 parts to the whole, supposing the Diameter of the earth to be 8355 miles; as *P. Gassendus* computes both. And it is more then probable, that men have been exceedingly mistaken, as to the heights of mountains, which comes so far short of what Sir *Walter Rawleigh* allows to them, that the highest mountain in the world will not be found to be five direct miles in height taking the altitude of them from the plain they stand upon. *Olympus* whose height is

Ibid.

Tom. 2. op.
Phys. scil.
3. l. 1.

so extold by the Poets and ancient Greeks, that it is said to exceed the clouds, yet *Plutarch* tells us that *Xenagoras* measured it and found it not to exceed a mile and a half perpendicular and about 70 paces. Much about the same height *Pliny* saith that *Dicaearchus* found the mountain *Pelion* to be. The mount *Athos* is supposed of extraordinary height, because it cast its shadow into the *Iste* of *Lemnos*, which according to *Pliny* was 87 miles, yet *Gassendus* allows it but two miles in height; but *Isaac Vossius* in a learned discourse concerning the height of mountains in his notes on *Pomponius Mela*, doth not allow above 10 or 11 furlongs at most to the height of mount *Athos*. *Caucasus* by *Ricciolus* is said to be 51 miles in height: *Gassendus* allowing it to be higher then *Athos* or *Olympus*, yet conceives it not above three or four miles at most; but *Vossius* will not yield it above two miles perpendicular, for which he gives this very good reason; *Polybius* affirms there is no mountain in *Greece* which may not be ascended in a dayes time, and makes the highest mountain there not to exceed ten furlongs; which saith *Vossius*, it is scarce possible for any one to reach unless he be a mountaineer born; any other will scarce be able to ascend above six furlongs perpendicular; for in the ascent of a mountain every pace doth reach but to an hand breadth perpendicular; but if we do allow eight furlongs to a dayes ascent, yet thereby it will appear that the highest mountains in the world are not above twenty four furlongs in height, since they may be ascended in three dayes time: and it is affirmed of the top of mount *Caucasus*, that it may be ascended in less then the compass of three dayes, and therefore cannot be much above two miles in height. Which may be the easier believed of any other mountain, when that which is reputed the highest of the world, viz. the Pike of *Teneriffe* which the inhabitants call *Pica de Terxuria*, may be ascended in that compass of time, viz. three dayes: for in the months of *July* and *August* (which are the only months in which men can ascend it, because all other times of the year snow lyes upon it, although neither in the *Iste* of *Teneriffe* nor any other of the *Canary Islands* there be snow ever seen) the inhabitants then ascend to the top of it in three dayes time, which top of it is

Plat. in Amilium. Plin. l. 2. c. 63.

Voss. in Pomp. Melā l. 2. c. 2. p. 115. & c.

V. Varenium Geogr. General. l. 1. c. 10. prop. 3.

not *Pyramidal* but *plain*, from whence they gather some *sulphureous stones* which are carried in great quantities into *Spain*. So that according to the proportion of *eight furlongs* to a *dayes journey*, this *Pske* of *Teneriffe* will not exceed the height of a *German mile* perpendicular, as *Varenius* confesseth, than which he thinks likewise, that no mountain in the world is higher. For what *Pliny* speaks of the *Alps* being *fifty miles* in height, must be understood not perpendicular, but in regard of the *obliquity* of the *ascend* of it; so that he might account so much from the *foot* of the *Alpes* to the top of them, and yet the *Alpes* in a perpendicular line not come near the height of a *German mile*. If then the highest mountains do not exceed much above *three miles* in height (for the *Spaniards* themselves affirm, that those lofty mountains of *Pern*, in comparison of which they say the *Alps* are but like *Cottages*, may be ascended in *four dayes* compass) we see from hence then far greater probability, how the *waters* in the time of the general *flood* might overtop the highest mountains.

9. 6. Especially if it be made evident that there is so great an *Abyss* of *subterraneous waters*, that the breaking open of the *fountains* of it may so much encrease the inundation arising from the *clouds*, and from the *breaking in* of the *Ocean* upon the main *Land*. And that there is such a *mass* of *waters* in the body of the earth is evident from the *Origins* of *Fountains*; for the opinion of *Aristotle* imputing them to the *condensation* of *aire* in the *caverns* of the earth, and that of other *Philosophers* ascribing them to the fall of *rain-water* received into such *cisterns* in the earth which are capable of receiving it, are both equally *unsatisfactory*, unless we suppose a *mass* of *waters* in the *bowels* of the earth, which may be as the common *stock* to supply those *Fountains* with. For it is very hard, conceiving how meer *aire* should be so far condensed, as to cause not only such a number of *Fountains*, but so great a quantity of water as runs into the sea by those *rivers* which come from them, (as the river *Volga* is supposed to empty so much water in a years time into the *Caspian Sea*, as might suffice to cover the whole earth) by which likewise it is manifest evident that there must be some subter-

anean passages in the Sea, or else of necessity, by that abundance of water which continually runs into it from the rivers, it would overflow and drown the world. And from this multitude of waters which comes from Fountains, it is likewise evident, that the *Origine* of Fountains cannot be meerly from such water which falls from the clouds, which would never suffice to maintain so full and uninterrupted a stream as many Fountains have: Especially if that be true which some assert, that rain water doth never moisten the earth above ten foot deep, for of far greater profundity many Fountains are. And besides, the rain water runs most upon the surface of the earth, and so doth rather swell the rivers which thereby run with greater force in their passage to the Ocean, and doth not lodge it self presently in the earth, especially if it descends in a greater quantity which alone is able to fill such Cisterns supposed to be in the earth, especially in mountains, which may keep a stream continually running. Although therefore we may acknowledge that the fall of rain may much conduce to the overflowing and continuance of Fountains, as is evident by the greater force of springs after continued rains, and by the decay of many of them in hot and dry weather (which yet I had rather impute to the Sun's exhaling by his continued heat those moist vapours in the earth, which should continually supply the springs, then meerly to the want of rain) and by the rise of most great rivers from such Fountains which came from the foot of mountains; where the ground is supposed to be of so hard and consistent a substance, as stone, or chalk, or something of like nature which might help to the conservation of water there, from whence it after ran in streams to the Ocean (which was the great argument of the famous *Peireskians* for this opinion) although I say, these things may argue thus far, that rain water doth much conduce to the preservation of springs, yet it cannot give a sufficient account of the *Origine* of them: Which with the greatest reason and probability is imputed to those subterraneous waters which pass up and down through the bowels of the earth. Some have fancied the earth to be as one great Animal, whose subterraneous passages were like veins in the body

V. Gassend.
vit. Peiresk.
lib. 1. 3.
p. 292.

body which received water out of the Sea, as the veins do blood out of the Liver; and that there are some kind of hot vapours in the earth which supply the place of vital spirits, which are diffused up and down the body through the arteries. And that as in an animal there are some parts which upon the least prick do send forth blood; and others are more callous where the incision must be deeper before any blood appears; so it is in the earth; when it is opened in a right vein we find presently a spring of water; but if we chance to hit on a wrong place, we go deep and may find none; not that water is wanting, but we have not hit on the veins through which it runs. And thence as the blood with equal freedom and velocity ascends into the head as it runs into the legs, because it is equally dispersed into all the parts from the center of it; so in the body of the earth it is as natural for the water to ascend into the tops of mountains, as it is to fall down into the center of the earth. And that it is no more wonder to see springs issue out of mountains, then it is to see a man bleed in the veins of his forehead when he is let blood there. So in all places of the earth the parts of it are not disposed for aperture; for some of them are so hard and compact, that there seems to be no passage through them (which is the most probable reason, why there is no rain neither in those places, because there is no such exudation of those moist vapours through the surface of the earth, which may yield matter for rain, as it is in many of the sandy places of Africa, but usually mountainous Countries have more large, and as it were Temple-veins through which the moist vapours have a free and open passage, and thence there are not only more frequent springs there, but clouds and rains too.) Now if this account of the Origine of springs in the earth be as rational as it is ingenious and handsome (and there is not much can be said against it, but only that then all fountains should be salt as the water is from whence they come) then we easily understand how the earth might be overflowed in the universal Deluge; for then the fountains of the deep were broken up, or there was an universal opening of the veins of the earth, whereby all the water contained in them would presently run upon the surface of the earth,

earth, and must needs according to its proportion advance its self to a considerable height. But because the salving the difference of the water in *springs* from what it is in the *Sea* is so considerable a *Phænomenon* in our present case, I therefore rather take this following as the most rational account of the *Origine* of *Fountains*, viz. That there are great *Cavities* in the earth, which are capable of receiving a considerable quantity of water, which continually runs into them from the *Sea* (which as it continually receives fresh supplies from the *Rivers* which empty themselves into it, so it dispatcheth away a like quantity through those *spongy* parts of the earth under the *Ocean*, which are most apt to suck in and convey away the surplussage of water) so that by this means the *Sea* never swells by the water conveyed into it by the *Rivers*, there being as continual a *circulation* in the body of the earth of the water which passeth out of the *Ocean* into the *subterraneous caverns*, and from thence to the *Mountains*, and thence into the *Sea* again; as there is a *circulation* of blood in mans body from the heart by the *arteries* into the *exterior parts*, and returning back again by the *veins* into the heart. According to which we may imagine such a place in the heart of the earth like *Plato's Barathrum*.

Τῆλε μάλ' ἤχι βάθυτον ἄνδ' ἔστιν ἐντὶ βάρατρον,

as *Plato* in his *Phædrus* describes it out of *Homer*, a long and deep *subterraneous cavity*. εἰς γὰρ τῷ τοῦ ἄσματος οὐρήϊον τι πάντες οἱ ποταμοὶ, καὶ ἐκ τούτου πάλιν πάντες ἐκρέουσιν. Into which cavity all the *Rivers* at last flow, and from which they again disperse themselves abroad. Now this *Cavity* of the earth thus fill'd with water supplies the place of the heart in the body of the earth, from which all those several *aqueducts* which are in the earth have their continual supply; but that which makes those passages of water which we call *springs* and *fountains* properly, I suppose, is thus generated; From those *Cavities* fill'd with water in the earth by reason of the hot streams which are in the body of the earth, there are continually rising some vapours or little particles of water, which are

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disjoyned from each other by the *heat*, by reason of which they attain a greater *celerity* of *motion*, and so pass through the inner *pores* of the earth till they come near the *superficies* of it. Which when they have approached to, they are beat back again by the *cold* which environs the *surface* of the earth; or at least are so arrested by the *cold*, and condensed by it, that they lose the form of *vapours* and become perfect *water* again. Which *water* being now more *gross*, then while it was a meer *vapour*, cannot descend again through the same *pores* through which it ascended before, because these are not now capable of receiving it: And therefore it seeks out some *wider passages* near the *surface* of the earth, by which means it moves in an *oblique manner*, and is ready to embrace any other *vapours* which are arrested in the same manner: now when these are grown to a considerable *body* in the *surface* of a *mountain*, or a *plain*, and find a vent fit for them, there appears a proper *fountain* whose *streams* are still maintained by the same *condensation* of *vapours*, which when they are once come abroad are in continual *motion* whereby *Rivers* are made, which are still finding a passage through the *declivity* of the *surface* of the earth, whereby they may return to the *Ocean* again. Now according to this account, that grand *Phænomenon* of the *freshness* of *fountain water* when the water of the *Sea* is salt, whence it originally comes, is sufficiently resolved. For meer *transcolation* may by degrees take away that which the *Chymists* call the *fixed salt*; and for the *Volatile salt* of it (which being a more spirituous thing, is not removeable by *distillation*, and so neither can it be by *transcolation*) yet such an *evaporation* as that mentioned, may serve to do it, because it is evident that *fresh water* will fall from the clouds which hath risen from those *vapours* which have come out of the *Sea*; and besides these *vapours* or small *particles* of water in their passage through the earth (especially when they come near the *surface* of it) do incorporate with other *sweet vapours* as those which come from *Rain* and others, by which means they insensibly lose their former *acidity* and *sharpness*. But those *fountains* which do retain their former *saltnesse*, as there are many such in the *World*, may very probably be supposed.

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supposed not to have come from these vapours condensed; but to be a kind of a breaking of *vein* in which the salt water was conveyed up and down the *body* of the earth. Now then considering that *mass* of *waters* and multitude of *vapours* arising thence which are in the earth, how easie is it for us to understand what the *breaking open* the *fountains* of the *deep* means in *Scripture*, and how by that means together with the *falling down* of the *Cataracts* of the clouds, and the letting loose of the *Ocean*, the whole earth might be overspread with an universal deluge. The possibility of which was the thing to be shewed.

The next thing we come to concerning the *Flood*, is, the capacity of the *Ark* for receiving the several *animals* which were to propagate the world afterwards. Concerning which, two things are necessary to be understood, what the measure of the *Ark* was, and what the *number* of *animals* contained in it. The measure of the *Ark* must be determined by the *proportion* of the *cubits*, which there is no reason at all to suppose either with *Origen* and others to have been the *Geometrical cubit*, which contains six ordinary cubits or nine feet, both because we find no mention at all of any such *cubits* in *Scripture*, and because the *Fabrick* of the *Ark* would have been of too vast a proportion. Neither yet is it probable, which Sir *W. Rawleigh* supposeth, that this *cubits* must be of a proportion as much exceeding ours as the *stature* of a *Giant* doth ours, both because there is no certain evidence, either from *Scripture* or *Reason*, that the *proportion* of men then did generally exceed what is now; and besides this tends not in the least to make the thing more plain. For according to that proportion, we must then have imagined *beasts* to have been as well as men; for the *horse* must have been *proportionably* as great to have been serviceable to men of that stature, and so the *Animals* would have taken up as much more room in the *Ark* as the *cubits* is supposed to be bigger. I suppose then that *Moses* speaks of the *cubits* most in use in his own time, (for he writ so that they for whose use he writ might be easily able to understand him), now this *cubits* by the consent of *Writers* contained 3 feet and a half in length, according to which proportion,

Gen. 6. 15

Buteo de
arca No.
P. 93.
Hofius de
fabrica
Arca No-
ah th. 66.

portion, supposing the *Ark* by *Moses* his description to have 300 cubits in length, 50 in breadth, and 30 in height, the whole capacity of the *Ark* according to the computation of *Joh. Buteo* comes to 450000 solid cubits. For the length of 300 cubits being multiplied into the breadth of 50 cubits, and the product by the height of 30 cubits makes the whole Concavity 450000. Which *Matthiam Hofius* reducing to the German measure, makes the longitude of the *Ark* to be 3.1 perches, 4 cubits, 5 fingers; the latitude 5 perches, 2 cubits, and 11 fingers; the altitude 3 perches, 1 cubit, 9 fingers; allowing to every perch 15 Roman feet. So that if we take a perch to contain 10 Hebrew cubits, which exceeds the former 11 fingers, the whole capacity of the *Ark* will be 450 cubical perches. And as he saith, *Hujusmodi sane adificii amplitudo capacissima est, & quamlibet magno animantium numero haud dubie sufficere poterit*, the *Ark* of so large a capacity might easily contain the several kinds of animals in it. Which will be easily understood, if according to our former supposition, only the animals of the inhabited part of the world were preserved in the *Ark*; but admitting that all kinds of animals were there, there would be room enough for them and for provision for them. For which *Sir W. Rawleigh* gives a prudent caution, that men ought not to take animals of a mixed nature, as *Mules* and *Hyena's*, nor such as differ in size and shape from each other, as the *Cat* of *Europe* and *Ounce* of *India*, into the several species of animals. *Sir W. Rawleigh* following *Buteo* reckons 89. or, lest any be omitted, a 100. several kinds of beasts, and undertakes to demonstrate from a triple proportion of all beasts to the *Ox*, *Wolf*, and *Sheep*, that there was sufficient capacity for them in the *Ark*. *Hofius* allows 150 several kinds of animals, yet questions not the capacity of the *Ark*, but these things are so particularly made out by those learned Authors, especially by *Buteo*, that I shall rather refer the Reader for further satisfaction to the Authors themselves, than take the pains to transcribe them.

§. 8.

I come now therefore to the evidence of the truth and certainty of this universal Deluge, of which we have most clear and concurring Testimonies of most ancient Nations of the

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the world. For which purpose *Grotius* and others have at large produced the testimony of *Berosus* the *Chaldean* out of *Josephus*, concerning the Flood and the Ark in which *Noah* was preserved, of *Abydnus* out of *Cytil* and *Eusebius* concerning *Xisuthrus*, or *Noahs* sending out of the birds to see if the flood were asswaged, and of *Alexander Polyhistor* concerning the preservation of animals in the Ark, of *Plutarch* concerning the sending out of the *Dry*, of *Lucian de Dea* *Syria* concerning the whole story, and so of *Molon* and *Nicolanus Damascenus*. Besides it is manifested by others, how among the *Chaldeans* the memory of *Noah* was preserved under the Fable of *Oannes*, which had part of a fish and part of a man, as is evident from the fragments of *Apollodorus*, *Abydnus*, and *Alexander Polyhistor*, preserved in *Eusebius* his *Greek Chronica*; among the *Chineſes* under the name of *Puoncuus*, who by them is said to have escaped alone with his Family out of the universal Deluge, saith *Isaac Voſſius*, who suppoſeth *Pu* or *Pi* to be only a Prefix to the name, and so that *Puoncuus* is the ſame with *יֵנֹאֲחַן*. *Martinus* tells us, *de diſmſio multa eſt apud Sinicos*. *Scriptores mentio*, that the ancient Writers of the *Sinick* history ſpeak much of the Flood. *Johannes de Laet* tells us out of *Leſcharbotus* how conſtant the tradition of the Flood is among the *Indians*, both in new *France*, *Peru*, and other parts. This being therefore ſo fully attested by the evident and apperent conſent of ſo many Writers and *Hiſtorians*, which did not own the authority of the Scriptures; I ſhall ſuppoſe this ſufficiently proved, and proceed to the main thing which concerns the *Origin of Nations*, which is, *The certainty of the propagation of mankind from the poſterity of Noah*. Of which there is this ſtrong and convincing evidence, that in all that account which the Scripture gives of the propagation of Nations from the Sons of *Noah*, there is ſome remainder in the history of that Nation to juſtify the reaſon of the impoſition of the name from the names of the Nations themſelves, which have preſerved the original name of their Founder in their own, as the *Medes* from *Madai*, the *Thracians* from *Thiras*, the *Ionians* from *Javan*, the *Sidonians* from *Sidon*, the *Philifins* from *Peliſthim*, the *Arcaans*, *Aradians*, *Elymaans*,

Gro. Annot.
ad l. 1. de
Verit. Ari-
stot. 1. 2.
Phaleg.
Junius in
Gen. 10.
Bochart.
G. og.
Sacr. p. 1.

Elymaans, Assyrians, Lydians, from *Arki, Arrad, Elam, Assur and Lud*, and many others produced by *Grosius, Montanus, Junius*, and especially *Bochartus*, who with admirable industry and learning hath cleared all this part of *Sacred History*, which concerns the reason of the *Imposition* of the names of the people which were propagated from the posterity of *Noah*, and given a full and satisfactory account of the several places where the posterity of *Noah* seated themselves after the Deluge. In stead of that therefore, I shall consider the pretences which can be brought against it, which are chiefly these three. 1. That the *Chaldean Empire* seems to have greater antiquity then can be attributed to it by the History of *Moses*. 2. That the most learned *Heathen Nations* pretend to be self-originated, and that they came not from any other *Countray*. 3. That no certain account is given from whence *America* should be peopled.

§. 9.

1. The History of the *Assyrian Empire* seems inconsistent with the propagation of the World from the sons of *Noah*; For the reign of *Ninus* and *Semiramis* is placed by many *Chronologers* within the first Century after the flood, which seems a manifest inconsistency with the propagation of mankind from the Sons of *Noah*; for it seems utterly impossible that the foundations of so great an *Empire* should be laid in so small a compass of time by the posterity of three persons; and besides *Ninus* and *Semiramis* were not the first who began the *Assyrian Empire*; for *Belus* not only reigned fifty five years before *Ninus*, but according to the *Chaldean Antiquities* from *Erechon*, who they say first reigned among them, are reckoned 495 years. But admit that the beginning of the *Assyrian Empire* be placed so low as *Praxinus* and other *Chronologers* would have it, viz. in the year after the Flood, 153. yet the difficulty is only somewhat abated, but not removed; for it seems yet unconceivable that from three persons in 150 years, such multitudes should spring, as to make so large an *Empire* as that of *Ninus*, and that within an hundred years after the Flood there should be such vast multitudes for the building the *Tower of Babel* and *disperſion* up and down the World, so that according

Petav. de
doctr. temp.
l. 9. c. 14.
Tom. 2.

according to the *Hebrew computation*, in the compass of 300. years, viz. about *Abraham's* time, the World was so fully peopled, that we read of several Kings encountering one another, by which it is evident the World had been peopled sometime before, or else there could not have been such potent Kings as some of them were at that time. This being the grand difficulty, to it I answer these things.

1. There is no such certainty of the beginning of the *Assyrian Empire*, as for the sake of that, to question the truth of the propagation of the World by the Sons of *Noah*. I have already largely manifested the want of credibility in the *Chronology* of the *antient Chaldeans*, and that we have no certain grounds to rely upon in reference to it. Especially as to those seven first *Babylonian Kings*, which are cited out of *Africanus* by *Eusebius*, and *Georgius Syncellus*, viz. *Erechbons*, *Comabulus*, *Porns*, *Nechubes*, *Abius*, *Oniballus*, *Chinzirus*, who are said to reign 225 years, two moneths; and alike fabulous, I suppose, is the other *Dynasty* of six *Arabian Kings*, whose Empire is said to have stood 215. years to the time of *Belus*, who expelled the *Arabians* and took the power to himself; And it is much more agreeable to reason to reject these two *Dynasties*, which have no record of them left in any *History* of the *Assyrian Empire*, but only in *Berosus*, whose authority in this case hath been discussed already, than to follow our late excellent *Primate of Armagh*, who punctually sets down the reign of the Kings of these two *Dynasties*, but cuts off at least eight Ages in the time of the *Assyrian Empire* from *Ninus* to *Sardanapalus*, which time he confines to 496 years, and places *Ninus* in the 2737 year of the World, according to the *Hebrew computation*, and so to live in the time of the *Judges*, and be contemporary with *Deborah*: Which he builds only on a place in *Herodotus*, which relates not to the time between *Ninus* and *Sardanapalus*, but to the time of the *destruction* of the *Medes* from the *Assyrian Empire*, as *Isaac Vossius* hath already shewed. We cannot then find any certainty in the beginning of the *Assyrian Empire*, which may give us cause to question the propagation of the World from the posterity of *Noah*.

Usser. Adu. Adu. Hor. Gen. 9. 3.
ales Vet. Test. A. M. 1737.

Castigat. Adu. Hor. Gen. 9. 3.

2. We have reason to think that there was a more then ordinary multiplication of the world from the sons of Noah after the Flood. For as God had before punished the world by destroying mankind in it by an extraordinary manner; so after the Flood, he doth in a particular manner bless Noah and his Sons, and said unto them, *Be fruitfull and multiply, and replenish the earth*, which may well be thought to have then had an extraordinary effect. Severall wayes have been attempted by learned men to make appeare, to what a vast number the posterity of Noah would increase in the space of two or three hundred years after the Flood. Petavius supposeth that the posterity of Noah might beget children at seventeen, and that each of Noahs sons might have eight children in the eighth year after the flood, and that every one of these eight might beget eight more; by this means in only one Family as of Japhet in the year after the Flood 238. he makes a *Diagramme*, consisting of almost an innumerable company of men. *Johannes Temporarius*, as our most learned Primate tells us; takes this way, that all of the posterity of Noah when they attained twenty years of Age had every year twins, on which supposition by *Arithmetical progression*, he undertakes to make it appear, that in the 102 year after the flood, there would be of males and Females 1554420. but taking away the one half, because of the groundless supposition of twins, yet then in that time there would be 388605. males besides Females. Others suppose that each of the Sons of Noah had ten sons, and by that proportion, in few Generations, it would amount to many thousands within a Century. Others insist on the parallel between the multiplication of the Children of Israel in Egypt; that if from 72 men in the space of 215 years there are procreated 600000. how many will be born of three men in the space of an hundred years - some have said above 23000. but with what success in their *Arithmetick* I shall not determine. But whether, all or any of these wayes be sufficient, and satisfactory, we have yet cause to believe that there was a more then ordinary multiplication in the posterity of Noah after the flood.

3. If we embrace the accounts of those Copies, which the *Sepinagins*

Petav. de
doctrin.
Temp. l. 9.
c. 14.

Offer.
Chronol.
Sacr. c. 5.

Horn. de-
sens. dissert.
de et. mun-
di. c. 26.

Septuagint followed in their version, all this difficulty is then ceased. For that account doth very much enlarge the times, and makes almost a thousand years between the *Flood* and *Abraham*, by which means there will be sufficient space given for the propagation of mankind, the building the *Tower of Babel*, the dispersion of Nations, the founding the *Assyrian Empire*, the plantation of *Egypt*, *China*, and other places, all which seem to have been in that time, and to concur with that computation, as well as *Josephus* doth, and the whole *Primitive Church* before *Hierome*, which certainly ought in no case to be disregarded.

The whole *Controversie* concerning this part of the *Chronology* of the world comes at last to this, whether it be more probable that the *Jewes*, who lived under the *second Temple* (who then were the Trustees, to whom were committed the *Oracles of God*) whom the *LXX.* followed in their version, had the true reading, or the *Talmudick Jews* after their dispersion and banishment from their Countrey, when they were discarded by God himself from being his People, when he broke up *House* among them at the *Destruction* of *Jerusalem* and the *Temple*. But if the Reader desire further satisfaction concerning this difference of the *Chronology* of the *LXX.* from that of the present *Hebrew Copies*, he may consult the *Proleg. ad* Learned Dissertation of the late Learned Bishop of *Chester* *bibl. Poly-* upon the *LXX.* and the later Discourses of *Isaac Vossius* *glotcap. 9.* on this subject. Setting aside then the Controversie be- *p. 58, 63,* *&c.* tween the present *Hebrew Copies* and the *LXX.* in point of *Isaac Vossius* integrity and incorruption which I meddle not with, I cannot *us de LXX.* but subscribe to the judgement of our judicious Historian, *Interp. &* Sir *Walter Raleigh*: That if we look over all, and do not *stat. mund:* hastily satisfy our understanding with the first things offered *History of* and thereby being satiated do slothfully and drowsily sit down, *the World.* we shall find it more agreeable rather to follow the reckoning of *p. 1. b. 2. c. 1* the *LXX.* who according to some Editions make it above 1072. *sect. 7.* years between the *Flood* and *Abrahams birth*, than to take away any part of those 352. years given. For if we advisedly consider the state and countenance of the World such as it was in *Abrahams time*, yea before *Abraham* was born, we shall find that it were very ill done of us by following Opinion without the

Guide of Reason, to pare the time over deeply between Abraham and the Flood; because in cutting them too near the quick, the reputation of the whole Story might perchance bleed thereby, Were not the Testimony of the Scriptures supreme, so as no Objection can approach it; And that we did not follow withall this precept of Saint Austin, that wheresoever any one place in the Scriptures may be conceived disagreeing to the whole, the same is by ignorance of misinterpretation understood. For in Abrahams time all the then known parts of the world were peopled: all Regions and Countries had their Kings. Egypt had many magnificent Cities, and so had Palestine and all bordering Countries; yea all that part of the world besides as far as India: and those not built with sticks, but of hewn stones, and defended with walls and rampiers, which magnificence needed a parent of more antiquity then those other men have supposed. And therefore where the Scriptures are plainest and best agreeing with reason and nature, to what end should we labour to begit doubts and scruples, or draw all things into wonders and marvels? giving also strength thereby to common cavillers, and to those mens apish brains, who only bend their wits to find impossibilities and monsters in the Story of the World and Mankind. Thus far that excellent Historian, whose words deserve consideration. Thus much for the first Objection.

§. 10.
(2.)

The second is, From the great pretence of several Nations that they were self-originated, or came not from any other place. This was the pretence of the Egyptians, Grecians, ancient Inhabitants of Italy, and others. But how little reason we have to give credit to these pretences, will appear on these accounts: 1. The impossibility in nature that mankind should be produced in such a way as they imagined, which we have manifested already in our Discourse of the Origin of the Universe. 2. That the Nations which pretended this, were never able to give sufficient evidence of it to any other Nation which demanded it; which is manifest by their want of any certain Records of their ancient times, which is fully proved in our Discourse in the first Book of the want of credibility in Heathen Histories. 3. The onely probable reason, which induced these Nations to make themselves Aborigines, was, because they supposed themselves to be

be the first *Inhabitants* of the *Countries* they lived in, which although I may allow to the *Egyptians* and some other ancient *Nations*, yet I cannot do it to the *Hellens* or *Greeks*, who most vainly and arrogantly pretended to it. Which because it may give more light into the greatest *antiquities* of *Greece* and some other *Nations* then hath been yet discovered or taken notice of; and because it may further tend to clear the *Truth* of the *Scriptures* as to the *origin* of *Nations*, I shall more particularly enquire into the first *Plantation* of *Greece*. That it was first inhabited by some of *Noahs* posterity, is out of question with all those who prefer the most *ancient* and undoubted *Records* of *Scripture* before the fabulous impostures of mens brains. But by whose immediate Posterity the *Country* of *Greece* was first inhabited, is not yet so clear as it hath been generally presumed to be, by most who had rather follow the Dictates of others then spend time in such enquiries themselves: Which yet certainly are so far from being unworthy mens labour and industry, that nothing tends more clearly to advance the *Truth* of *Scripture History*, then the reconciling the *Antiquities* of the *elder Nations* to what we find delivered of the *Plantation* of the *World* from the posterity of *Noah*. As to this particular therefore, of the first *plantation* of *Greece*, I shall first propound the *Opinion* generally embraced among *Learned Men*, and then shew how farr it is defective, and what other more true account may be given of it. It is evident from *Moses*, *Genesis* 10. 5. that the posterity of *Japhet* took possession of the *Iles* of the *Gentiles*, i. e. according to the *Hebrew Idiom*, not onely such as are properly so called, but all those *Countries* which lay much upon the *Sea*, being at any distance from *Palestine*, especially such as lay between the *Ocean* and *Mediterranean Sea*; and so both *Greece* and *Italy* come under the name of the *Iles* of the *Gentiles*. Among the sons of *Japhet* none is conceived so probable to have first peopled *Greece* as he whose name was preserved among the *inhabitants* of *Greece* with very little alteration. And so as the *Medes* from *Madai*, the *Assyrians* from *Assur*, the *Thracians* from *Thiras*, by the like *Analogy* the *Ionians* from *Javan*. From which it is observable that

Hesych. v.
"Ιανν.
Schol. in
Arist.
Acharnens.
Stephanus
de urb. v.
"Ιαν.
Hom. l. ii.

although among the *Greeks* themselves the *Ionians* were but as one division of that people which inhabited Greece, yet other Nations comprehended all under the name of *Ionians*. For which we have sufficient evidence from *Hesychius* and the *Scholiast* on *Aristophanes* Οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς Ἑλλάδος Ἴωνες λέγονται, saith *Hesychius*; and more to this purpose the *Scholiast* speaks. Πάντας τῆς Ἑλλάδος Ἴωνες οἱ βασιλεῖς ἐνόμιζον. For *Ionians* with the Insertion of the *Æolick Digamma*, (which is always done when two vowels meet) is Ἰωνες, i.e. *Javones*, and *Stephanus Byzantinus* tells us, that from Ἴων comes Ἴων, and so *Homer*,

Ἐνθα δὲ Βοιωτὸς δὲ Ἴωνες ἑκαχιστῶτες.

And *Dionysius Periegetes* reckons up Ἴων as one of the Rivers of *Arcadia*,

Dionys. ii.
416:

Ἐἰδα μέλας, ὅθι Κεῖθ' οἶς, ἴνα πένυξθ' Ἴων:

And which much confirms this Opinion, the *Hebrew* word for *Javan* before the points added by the *Masorites*, viz. יָוָן bears a perfect Analogy with the *Greek* Ἴων; and יָוָן in Scripture is taken for *Greece*; and so *Dan.* 8. 21. *Alexander* is call'd יָוָן which the *LXX.* render βασιλεὺς ἐλλήνων, and *Joel* 3. 6. You have sold my sons לְכֹנִי הַיָּוָן to the *Sons of Javan*, i. e. to the *Greeks*, as it is generally understood. But as *Javan* cannot be supposed to have come into these parts without his Family, so it is generally presumed that there are no obscure footsteps left of *Javans* eldest son, *Elisha's* seating himself in *Greece*. For from him *Josephus* derives the name Ἀλωαίς, with whom the *Jerusalem Para-*

Ar. Mon-
tan. Phaleg.
p. 24.

phrast concurs. *Montanus* from thence derives the name *Elis*, from whence he supposeth the *Greeks* are called ἑλλήνες.

Bochart.
Phaleg. l. 3.
cap. 10.

Bochartus finds the clearest remainders of *Elisha* in *Elis* the same with *Peloponnesus*, one part of which by *Homer* is called *Alisium*; thence *Ezek.* 27. 7. we read of the Purple and Scarlet from the Isles of *Elisha*, which makes it most probable to be that part of *Greece* which lay upon the *Ionian Sea*, where the best purple next to the *Tyrian* was found, as the

learned

learned Bochartus hath demonstrated from several Authours. This is now the substance of the generally received account concerning the Plantation of Greece from the posterity of Noah. Which if it be taken as to that People which did at length possess Greece, I see no reason to disapprove it; but if it be extended to the first plantation of Greece, I see as little to embrace it. That we may therefore judge more freely of the first Inhabitants of Greece, it is requisite we take an account of it from those who profess themselves most versed in their own Antiquities, who may in a matter of this nature which is attested by the common consent of the most learned Antiquaries of Greece, be the more credited, in that what they thus deliver, may be supposed to come from an ancient and undoubted Tradition.

It is evident therefore, from the judgement of the most Learned and judicious even of the Greeks themselves, that Greece was first inhabited by a People by them called Barbarians, i. e. a people different from them in Language and manners. So Ephorus, whom Polybius commends as the best Writer of the Greek Antiquities, saith, that Greece was inhabited by a barbarous people before the Hellenes came into it. And Hecataeus Milesius cited by Strabo concerning Peloponnesus ἐπὶ τῷ τῷ Ἑλλήνων ὠνομασμένῳ βαρβάρῳ, which Strabo himself not only believes of Peloponnesus but of all Greece that it was ἀποικία βαρβάρων τὸ πάλαιον, anciently a Plantation of Geogr. l. 7. Barbarians; the same is affirmed by Aristotle writing of the V. Scholiast. Common-wealth of the Tegeates concerning Arcadia, that before its being possessed by the Arcadians it was inhabited by in Apollonium l. 4. a Barbarous People, who because they were expelled their v. 262. Country, before Moon rising, the Arcadians called themselves ἀποστάντες. Whether that be the ground of that vainglorious boast (of which many Reasons are given by Learned men) I here dispute not; it is sufficient that we find the Grecians were not the first who peopled any of these several places; which is likewise attested by Herodotus, Thucydides, and others, whose Testimonies we shall afterwards produce. It being then evident that the Grecians were not the first who inhabited that Country after from them called Greece, it follows to be inquired what this Barbarous people was and

from whence they came. *Strabo* hath given us in a large Catalogue of the names of many of them, as the *Dryopes*, *Caucones*, *Leleges*, besides the *Aones*, *Tembices*, *Hyanies*, and many others; but these seem not to have been that ancient people, but rather some latter Castings of the *Carians*, who, as *Thucydides* tells us, did very often make inroads upon the quarters of *Greece*. That people which had the largest Spread and greatest Antiquity, was the *Pelasgi*: thence *Peloponnesus* was anciently called Πηλαγία. *Stephanus Byzantinus* πηλοποννήσου τῆς ἐπονομίας. Ἀπὸ Πηλαγία and Ἀργῆ: and *Apollodorus* saith, that the *Peloponnesians* were anciently called *Pelasgi*; and *Enripides*,

Πηλαγίως ὠνομαζέμενος τὸ πρὶν
Δαναός.

And elsewhere,

Πρῶτον Πηλαγοί, Δαναὸν τὸ δυνάμεν.

Geogr. l. 9. These *Pelasgi* were not onely in *Peloponnesus*, but in *Attica* too, as appears by *Strabo*, where he saith, The Nation of the *Pelasgi* did inhabit, and by the *Athenians* (that is, after their mixture) they were called πηλαγοί. Στράβων δὲ πάλιν παύειν for their frequent removals from place to place: and *Pausanias* mentions their being under the *Acronoli* at *Athens*: That they were in *Thessaly*, is evident from *Hesychius*, Πηλαγοὶ οἱ Θεσσαλοὶ, καὶ ἄλλων τῶν βαρβάρων, καὶ ἡμῶν ἀπὸ Πηλαγῶν τῶν Ἀρκάδων. ἡμῶν πολυπλάτην; *Arcadia* seems to have the first or chief place of their Residence; for the *Arcadians* who were accounted παλαιότατα ἔθνη τῶν ἑλλήνων, do vindicate the founder of this Nation, whom they call *Pelagus*, to themselves and say, he was an αὐτόχθων, among them, that is, the first who came into that Country; for all those whose Original they knew not, they called them *Terra filios*, and *geminos terra*. *Pausanias* rightly conjectures that he was the first man among them, not as though he was alone, but because the Chief Ruler and Commander among them, and that brought them into the Country; but though they might fix them-

Ch. 4. The Divine Authority of the Scriptures asserted. 563

themselves about *Arcadia*, it is evident they spread further; for *Menecrates Eleates* in his book of the *Founders of Cities*, *Strabo* affirms that all the Sea coasts of *Greece* called *Jonica* beginning l. 13. from *Mycalē*, were first inhabited by the *Pelasgi*; nay, we find them yet much higher up in *Epirus*, who were, as *Strabo* Lib. 7. tells us, the first Founders of the famous Oracle of *Dodona*; for so *Ephorus* in him saith it was *Πηλεγγών ἱδρυμα*, and that these were *Ἰὼν ὡς τὴν ἑλλάδα διαφεύσαντων ἀρχαῖοι*: thence the *Poet*,

Ζεῦ, ἀνὰ Δωδωναίη, Πηλεγγών

And *Hesiod*,

Δωδωνίῳ φηγόντε Πηλεγγών ἱδρυόν ἦιν.

Strabo further makes it evident, that they were a *barbarous* people which lived about *Dodona*, from the description *Homer* gives of them,

ἀμφὶ β' Σελλῶν

Σελ γαῖαν ὑποφῶν, ἀνιπτόποδες χαμαῖ ἔουσιν.

Which *Philostratus* best interprets when he saith, They were *In Imag.* αὐτομαδὸς πνεῦμα καὶ ἔκστασις ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ, such that thought the Gods were best pleased with their simplicity and severity of Life, and therein far different from the *Grecian* humour. *Suidas* in *Thessalicis* (cited likewise by *Strabo*) saith that the Temple of *Dodona* was removed from *Scotus* in *Pelassgia* in *Thessaly*, which is confirmed by *Herodotus* in *Enterpe*, where he largely speaks of the Temple and Oracle at *Dodona*. These *Pelasgi* confined not themselves to *Greece* neither, but were dispersed into the neighbour Islands, as *Chios*, *Creet*, *Lesbos*, *Lemnos*, *Imbro*, *Samos*, as will appear afterwards; and at last came into *Italy*, as is well known, and are thought to be the same with *Tyrrhenians*, and by some conceived to be the first Founders of *Rome*. We see what a large Spread the *Pelasgi* had over *Greece*, which was divided after the *Hellens* began to appear, into τὸ Πηλεγγών and τὸ Ἰωνικόν, as *Hero-*
dorus

doms witnesseth; and so these two appear to be a very different People from one another, and not the same under different names as is commonly thought.

§. 12.

Which sufficiently appears from their Language, which was quite different from one another. So *Herodotus* *Ἡρώδης Πισ-
ταχρύδι βαλκαρὸν γλῶσσαν ἔχοντες*; they used a barbarous language: i.e. a Language not understood by the *Hellens*; who at first, had their chief residence in *Thessaly*, from whence by degrees they came forwards into *Greece*, as *Thucydides* shews. For although the name of *Hellens* at last spread its self over all the people of *Greece*, yet it was at first peculiar to that part of *Thessaly* called *Pthiotis*, and thence *Homer* calls them properly *Hellens* which followed *Achilles* from thence; and it appears by *Homer* that there was a City there called *Ἰλλυς*, which as *Stephanus de Urbibus* tells us was there built by *Ἐλλης*, although he will not have him to be *Hellen* the son of *Dencalion*, but the son of *Pthius*, wherein he is mistaken; For *Thucydides* plainly shews that it was from *Hellen* the son of *Dencalion* that the name *Ἑλλήνους* came, and this *Hellen* lived in *Pthiotis*. But although they were first in *Pthiotis*, yet they daily increasing in numbers and power, by degrees they got all *Thessaly* into their hands, of which one part was called *μακροντίς*; afterwards under *Dorus* the son of *Hellen* they conquered *Hestiaëtis*, that part of *Thessaly* which lyes under the Mountains *Ossa* and *Olympus*; from thence they were beaten back by the *Cadmeans* into *Pindus*, where the *Greeks* were first called *Μακρόντις*, as *Herodotus* tells us; from hence they went into *Dryopis*, and thence into *Pelopponesus*, and there had the name *Dorians*; but before their coming hither, they had first secured themselves of the *Hellens* lying between *Thessaly* and *Pelopponesus*, and there they dispossessed the *Pelasgi* in all the *Attick Region*, who were now forced to submit or to fly; they who submitted, as most of them did, were incorporated into the *Greeks*, and became one people with them, and so by degrees lost that former Language which was peculiar to themselves and wholly distinct from the *Greek Tongue*. That the *Hellens* did thus gradually come into *Pelopponesus*, is evident from the names of people and places common to *Thessaly* and *Pelopponesus*,

ponnensu which came from hence, that though the *Greeks* left the *Cities* behind them, yet they carried most of the names along with them. Thus the *Achai*, *Ionians*, and *Aeolians*, and *Dorians* in *Peloponnensu* came from those of the same names in *Thessaly*; and so likewise the names of these following *Regions* and *Cities* were common to both, as *Ellopie*, *Estia*, *Eretria*, and *Oropos*, *Graia*, *Larissa*, *Psophia*, *Ison*, *Oecalia*, and very many others. *Salmasius* seems to be of Opinion, that the *Pelasgi* never used any Language distinct from the *Hellens*; but, besides that, it is directly contrary to the Testimony of *Herodotus*, the Arguments he produceth for it are very weak. The first is because the *Pelasgi* that went into *Italy*, did use the *Greek Tongue*, from their calling *Agylla* *Care*, from *Χαῖς* a word pronounced from one on the walls; and because the *Arcades* used onely the *Greek Language* in the *Aeolian Dialect*, which *Evander* carried with him into *Italy*, and from which most of the old *Roman Language* was derived. But doth not *Herodotus* expressly say, that after the mixture between the *Greeks* and *Pelasgi* these by degrees lost their own proper *Language* and made use of the common *Greek Tongue*? Yet afterwards too, it is evident from *Herodotus* in some places, as at *Crotona*, they did use a Language different from the *Greek*. His other Argument is, that the names of the eldest persons mentioned were originally *Greek*; but this is expressly denied by *Strabo*, who makes the contrary one of his strongest Arguments, that the *Barbarians* did anciently inhabit *Greece*; and instance in *Cecrops*, *Codrus*, *Aeolus*, *Cothus*, *Drymas*, *Crimannus*. Thus we have abundantly proved against the common Opinion, that *Greece* was not first peopled by the *Hellens*, or the posterity of *Elisa*, although these did afterwards come to the full possession of *Greece*.

It remains that we shew whence these *Pelasgi* came, and of whose posterity they were, and what the *Language* was which was used by them. He that gave the name to this people according to the *Grecian Fables*, was one *Pelasmus*: which none will wonder at among them, whose constant Custom it was, partly by reason of their Ignorance of the true account of their names, and partly by their pride that

they might not seem ignorant of any thing) when they meet with any names of People to find out some person near it who was the Founder of them. Thus *Attica* from *Atlas*, it being anciently called *Atlida*, and *Cranat* from *Cranatus*, *Egialca* from *Egialeus*, *Mauritania* from *Maurus*, *Scythia* from one *Scythes*, *Galatae* from *Galates*, and thus in multitudes of other names. But from the name *Pelasgi* we may probably find out the true founder of the people, allowing that variation which is usually caused through the *Greeks* melting the harsher words of the *Eastern Languages* into a sound fit for their more delicate palats, as is evident in the comparing the names of the Prophets in *Ebrew*, with what they are in the *Greek version*. Thus the *Pelasgi* may with great probability be derived from *Phaleg*; for which we have the concurrent Testimony of two learned persons, *Grotius* and *Salmasius*, who are contented to mention it, without bringing much evidence of Reason for it. What they only touch at, we shall endeavour to make out more at large; which we shall doe by removing the great presumptions against it, and laying down the probabilities for it. The great presumptions lying against it, are; for that the *Isses* of the *Nations* fell to the posterity of *Japheth*, and that *Phaleg* lived with *Eber* in *Chaldea*. For the first, it must be acknowledged that the greatest part of the *Countries* lying upon the *Ocean* and *Mediterranean*, were in the time when *Moses* wrote so inhabited; not that the habitations of the sons of *Noah* had their bounds and limits set them either by *God* or *Noah*, but that the posterity of *Japheth* did chiefly address themselves to those parts which lay towards *Europe*; but yet not so, as to exclude any of the posterity of *Sem*, if their necessities for further room made it necessary for them to seek for habitations further abroad. For we can have no reason to think, that because the chief of *Sem's* posterity did live together, therefore none of them went further off, which necessity would put them upon because of their great increase; for we read of *Phaleg* and others, that besides those in a direct Line to *Abraham* (whose Genealogy it was *Moses* his great design to recount) they begat many other sons and daughters, which would make it necessary for them,

Grot. not.
in lib. 1 de
jur. bet. &c
cap. 3.
Sal. de Hebr.
len.

Gen. II.
19. 11

them, to seek their *habitations* further abroad. And, that *Phaleg* and *Ragau* did so, we have the express Testimony of *Esiphanus*, *Ἐσῆφανος* καὶ *Ραγαῦ* ὅτι οἱ τὸν Ἑὐρώπην ἀπὸ τῆς Σκυθίας ἐκτὸς καὶ τῆς ἀνατολῆς ἰδὼν ἀποστειλόμενοι, καὶ τῆς τοῦ Θέου χάριτος, καὶ τῆς ἐκείνου ἐξουσίας, οἱ Θέου παῖδες.

De Scythi.
ep. ad Adu.
& Paulum.

That from the age of *Therab* and thence forward, *Phaleg* and *Ragau* diverted toward the *Clime* of *Europe*, to part of *Scythia*, and were joyned with those Nations from which the *Thracians* arise. Several things make this not so improbable as some have imagined it to be; for first, it is the constant acknowledgement of all sober inquirers into the *Original* of the *Greeks*, that *Greece* was first peopled from *Scythia*, and indeed almost all the Nations in *Europe* have come out of that Country: besides there is evidence of it, even in the *Grecian Fables*; for *Prometheus* (from whom the *Greeks* deriyed themselves) is fancied by them to lye bound in mount *Caucasus*, which must be supposed to be the Countrey from whence he came. Again it is evident already that the *Hellens* came not into *Greece* before it was peopled by the *Pelagis*, and that these had different *Language* and *Customs* from one another: Now then in all probability, although the posterity of *Elisa* might come first down from *Scythia* into those parts, and seat themselves in *Macedonia* and *Thessaly*, where they had in probability more then room enough at first and a Countrey to their desire; they might be willing to permit the posterity of *Phaleg* to pass on further; for in those first Plantations we cannot otherwise conceive, but, that the last comers must be the furthest goers; unless they had strength enough to drive the former inhabitants out of their seats whereof they were already possessed, as the *Scythians* did afterwards, and so the *Hellens*; So then the Posterity of *Phaleg* being forced to quit their own Countrey, because of the multitude of inhabitants, must be supposed to take that course, where in probability they might find an empty seat fit for them to dwell in; thence they come toward's *Europe*; for they saw how the posterity of *Sem* did spread it self Eastward already, and Chame Southward, and coming to part of that vast Countrey of *Scythia*, which was both already taken up and not so con-

venient an habitation for them, they draw downwards towards *Thracia*, and there the posterity of *Thiras* from whom the *Thracians* came had already possessed themselves; passing further into *Thressaly*, they find that already planted by some of the posterity of *Elisa*, but as yet but scant and thin of inhabitants; therefore they disperse themselves up and down through some part of *Epirus*, most part of *Ellas*, and some pass into *Peloponnesus*, where they fix themselves chiefly upon *Arcadia*, and thence spread up and down by degrees towards the *Sea-side*; for we cannot but think that the *Maritime parts* were the last peopled, partly for fear of another deluge, partly for want of conveniency of Navigation most of their Travels being by Land; and partly when Navigation grew more in use for fear of Pirates, who drove a great Trade upon the Coasts of Greece in elder times, as is most evident from *Thucydides* in the beginning of his History. Thus we have a reasonable account given of the *Pelasgi* their first coming into Greece, and how by degrees the *Hellens* came to possess their Country, and what a fair pretence the *Arcadians* had to boast of the greatest Antiquity, their Country being probably first peopled by the *Pelasgi* of any part of the whole *Chersonese*, and the seat of the Leader of the whole company whom they call *Pelasgus*, and the Scriptures *Phaleg*.

§. 14.

Having thus far cleared the Antiquities of Greece as to the first Planters of it, whom we have evidenced to have been the *Pelasgi*, and these derived from *Peleg*, it will be no great difficulty to resolve what Language they brought along with them, which must be supposed to be the same with that used in the family, from whence *Peleg* or *Phaleg* came, as to the substance of it, although it might admit as great variation of Dialect from it as the *Chaldei* or *Syriack* doth. But this I will not only suppose, but offer these probabilities for the proof of it, the first is, the agreement of the ancient Greek Language with the *Hebrew* in many of its primitive words; and here we have a most rational and probable account given of it; which is, the *Greeks* mixing with the *Pelasgi*, and both coming to be one people, they must needs retain many of the old words used by the *Pelasgi* in their

Greek.

Greek Language; which are evidently of an *Eastern* extraction, the ground of which cannot with such probability be fetched from *Cadmus* and the *Phœnicians*, because it is not so easie admission of a forraign Language after the perfection of their own, unless by long tract of time, or great numbers overrunning the former people, neither of which can be so truly affirmed of *Cadmus* and his company, for they were soon driven out of *Greece*, he himself ending his dayes in *Illyricum*; neither was their spread so large as that of the *Pelasgi*, who were before possessours of the Countrey; and it is continually seen how impossible it is for any Conquerours, as the *Greeks* were, to bring their own Language so into a place, where some of the former people are suffered to live, and not to retain many of their old words among them, and so make the Language mixt of both, as it is in all Nations conquered by the *Romans*; the *Roman* not being purely spoken by any, but corrupted with a mixture of the former Language in use among them. The second Argument is from the different pronunciation and dialects in use in the *Greek Language*; of which no account so likely can be given, as the mixture with different Languages. This is most evident in the *Dorick dialect*; for the *Dorians* inhabiting probably where most of the *Pelasgi* had been, their pronunciation and dialect comes the nearest to the *Eastern* of any of the *Greeks*: For in the *Dorick Dialect* the *πλαττασμός* or broad pronunciation, is most taken notice of: So he in *Theocrisus* upbraids the *Dorians*, *ὅτι πλαττασμοῖς ἀνυστα*, they speak every thing very broad; which answers to the pronunciation of the *Eastern Languages*; besides the *Dorick Dialect* delights much in adding *a* to the end of words, which besides that it is the custome of *Eastern Tongues*, especially the *Syrinck*, it doth much widen the pronunciation. The third Argument is from the remainders of the *Eastern Tongues* in those places, especially where the *Pelasgi* had been. The *Pelasgi* are much taken notice of for their frequent removes and travelling from one place to another; which I suppose was chiefly after the *Hellens* had conquered the Countrey where they dwelt, then they were forced to go seek better Habitations abroad; thence *Strabo* calls the

Nations

Lib. 5.

Nation of the *Pelasgi* πολύπλανον ἔτι πρὸς ἑσπερίαις ; and elsew' ere that they were πολλάχ' ἑσπερίαις τὸ παλαιόν

Lib. 12.

πλάσμινοι, they went up and down to great part of *Europe* ; but we may suppose them to have made their first and chief resort to the neighbour-Islands to *Greece* ; where we shall see what evidence they left of their *Language* there. The first *Island* we meet with them in, is *Crete* ; so *Strabo* speaking of them, ἡ δὲ τῆς Κρήτης ὅποι μαχίνασι, ὡς φησὶ Ὀμήρῳ ; that a *Colony* of them lived in *Crete*, for which he voucheth *Homer's* authority :

Odyss. 7.

175.

Ἄλλαν δ' ἄλλων γλῶσσα μιμνήσκου, ἐν μὲν Ἀχαιοί,
'Εν δ' Ἑσπερίαις μεγαλήτορες, ἐν δ' Κυθῶνες,
Δαρύειοι τε πελώριαι, δῖοι τε Πελασγοί.

De Phoen.

Col. l. 1. c.

15.

It is evident then that the *Pelasgi* were in *Crete*. Now most of the *Cretan* words are of an *Eastern* extraction, if we believe the Learned *Bochartus*, who hath promised a discourse on that Subject ; besides *Crete*, we find the *Pelasgi* in *Chios*, ἡ χίος ἡ ὀικιστὶς αὐτῶν Πελασγὸς φασὶ τὴν ἐν Θερσάλει, saith *Strabo*, the inhabitants of *Chios* say, that the *Pelasgi* of *Thessaly* were their first inhabitants ; and here the forenamed learned person hath derived the name *Chios*, the mountain *Pelinaus*, and the wine *Arvisum*, all from the *Eastern Languages*. The next we find them in, is *Lesbos*, ἡ δὲ τῆς Λεσβῶν Πελαργίῳ εἰρήνη, which from them was called

Lib. 1. c. 9.

Geogr. p. 2.

l. 1. c. 12.

Pelasgia, saith *Strabo*, whose name is likewise fetched out of the *East*. By *Bochartus* further we find them in *Lemnos* and *Imbros* ; so *Anticlidus* in *Strabo*, πρῶτες οὖν Πελασγοὶ τὰ περὶ Λήμνον Ἰμβρον κτίσται ; concerning whose names, see *Bochartus* 82. I know that Learned Author makes the *Phœnicians* the Authors of all these names, from no other ground generally, but because they are of an *Eastern* derivation ; but according to what we have laid down, we may yield to the thing it self, and upon clearer grounds ; for of some of these *Islands* he ingenuously confesseth he can find no evidence of the *Phœnicians* being in them. *Phœnices in his Insulis habitasse nusquam legimus* ; but we find it very Plain, that in those very *Islands* the *Pelasgi* inhabited ; and whether account

Lib. 1. c. 9.

count

count then be more probable, let the Reader judge. One thing more I shall insist on, which is the Original of the *Samothracian Mysteries*: That these were as to their names from the *Eastern Languages*, is now acknowledged by all Learned men, the *Cabiri* being so evidently derived from ככיר which signifies strength and power, i. e. the *Dii potes*, as *De Spect.* *Cabiri* is explained by *Varro* and *Tertullian*, and the particular names of the several *Cabiri* mentioned by the *Scholias* on *Apollonius* Ἀχιεῖς, Ἀχιεῖαρος, Ἀχιεῖαρος and Καδμῖλος, Lib. 1. c. 12. are very handsomely explained by that Learned and Excellent

Bocharius from the *Eastern Languages*; onely he will needs have them derived from the *Phœnicians*, whereas *Herodotus* expressly tells us that they were from the *Pelasgi*, whose words are these; ὅστις ἢ τὰ Καβίρων ὄνομα μνησέναι τὰ Σαμοθρηκίαν ἐπιπλέων λαβόντες παρὰ Πελασγῶν: And again, τὴν γὰρ

Σαμοθρηκίαν οἶκον πρότερον Πελασγῶν ἦν τῇ παρ' Ἀθηναίοισι σύνοικοι ἰγύοντο, ἃ παρὰ τούτοις Σαμοθρηκίαν τὰ ὄνομα λαμβάνουσι. Lib. 2.

We see evidently by this, that the *Samothracians* derived their Mysteries from the *Pelasgi*; and without all question they had their names from thence, whence they derived their *Mysteries*: And to this purpose it is further observable, that as the old *Ettrurians* were certainly a Colony of the *Pelasgi*, upon their removal out of *Greece*; so *Vossius* observes that the old *Ettruscan Language* (ferè à Syris habet cuncta sacrorum nomina) hath almost all the sacred appellations from the *Eastern Tongues*. For which purpose it is further observable, which *Grotius* takes notice of, that the *jus pontificum Romanorum* was taken a great part from the *Ettrusci*, and the *Ettrurians* had it ab *Hebraeis* out of the *Eastern parts*. De Idol. l. 2. c. 57. Annot. in Mat. 12. 1.

By all which I cannot conceive but this Opinion, notwithstanding its novelty, is advanced to as high a degree of probability, as any that stands on the like foundations; and not onely so, but is an excellent clue to direct into the Labyrinth of *Antiquities*, and gives us a fair account whence the *Eastern Tongues* came to be so much used among both the ancient *Greeks* and *Ettrurians*. One thing more this will help us to understand far better than any *salvo* hath been yet used for it; which is the affinity spoken of by *Arimus* King of *Lacedamon*, in his Letters to *Onias*, between the

Maccab.

12. 21.

Antiq. l.

13. 9.

De Idol. l.

1. c. 13.

Jewes and Lacedamonians: ἐν τῇ βίβλῳ τῇ τοῦ Σπάρτανων ἔστι βιβλὸς ὃν εἶπεν ὁ Ἀβραὰμ ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀρετὴ τῆς Ἀβελίαν: which is explained by *Josephus* thus: ἐν τῇ βίβλῳ τῇ τοῦ Σπάρτανων ἔστι βιβλὸς ὃν εἶπεν ὁ Ἀβραὰμ ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀρετὴ τῆς Ἀβελίαν: *They had found in a book that the Jews and Lacedamonians were of the same stock, from their mutual relation to Abraham. Vossius* thinks the Original of this was from those of the posterity of *Anak*, who came into Greece, and peopled *Sparta*, and would seem to have been of the posterity of *Abraham*; or that they were partly of the posterity of *Abraham* by *Agar* or *Cethura*, and partly of the *Canaanites* driven out by *Joshua*: But how unlikely a thing is it (supposing *Sparta* peopled by the *Canaanites*, which yet is not evident) that they should give out themselves to be of that stock which they had been expelled their Country by? And for the true posterity of *Abraham* coming thither, as we have no ground for it but the bare assertion; so we have this strong evidence against it, that all that came from *Abraham* were circumcised, as the *Ismaelites*, *Hagarens*, &c. which we never read of among the *Lacedamonians*. *Hugo Grotius* differs not much from the opinion of *Vossius* concerning the ground of this kindred between the *Jewes* and *Spartans*: For in his Notes on that place in the *Maccabees*, where it is spoken of, he gives this account of it. The *Dorians*, of whom the *Spartans* were a part, came from the *Pelagii*; the Language of the *Pelagii* was different from that of the *Greeks*, as appears by *Herodotus* in his *Clio*: οὐκ οἱ Πηλαγοὶ βαλκάνων γλώττιαν ἔχουσιν. Now the *Pelagii* (saith he) are ἡμεῖς διασπέρσι, a scattered Nation; thence he supposeth these *Pelagii*, or banished people, to have come from the confines of *Arabia* and *Syria*, in which the posterity of *Abraham* and *Cethura* had placed themselves. But 1. it is uncertain whether the posterity of *Abraham* by *Keturah* were placed so near *Canaan* or no. I know *Junius* endeavours to find the Seat of all the sons of *Cethurah* in *Arabia*; but *Mercer* gives several not improbable Reasons why he conceives them placed not in the East of *Canaan* but in the Eastern parts of the world. 2. We have no evidence at all of any remove of these sons of *Abraham* by *Keturah* out of the parts

parts of *Arabia*, supposing them placed there; nor any reason why they should be banished thence. 3. That which was the badge of *Abrahams* posterity, was never that we read of in use among the *Spartans*, which was *Circumcision*. Indeed in much latter Ages then this we speak of, we read of a people among the *Thracians* who were circumcised, whom the *Greeks* themselves judged to be *Jews*. So *Aristophanes* brings the *Odomanes* in, Τῆς τῶν Ὀδομαντῶν τῇ Ἀχαρνῆσι. πῶς ἀποτίθεται αὐν; ἀποτίθεται (saith the *Scholiast*) i.e. ἀπὸ πολλῶν, ἡλικαίοντο ὅς ἐστιν ἀπὸ πολλῶν τοῦ ὅσους τὸ ἀποτίθαι καὶ ἀποτίθαι ἑκάστου. Whereby it is plain that *Circumcision* was in use among the *Thracians*; For these *Odomanes* were (saith the *Scholiast*) a people of *Thrace*. φασι δὲ αὐτοὺς Ἰουδαίους εἶναι. It seems it was a tradition among them that they were *Jews*. If so, it seems most probable that they were some of the *ten Tribes*, who were placed about *Colchis*, and the adjacent places: For *Herodotus* in *Euterpe* saith, that the *Syrians* that lived about the Rivers *Thermodon* and *Parthenius*, learned *Circumcision* from the *Colchi*, of whom he saith, αὐτοὶ πάντων Κίλχοι καὶ Αἰγύπτιοι καὶ Ἀθίοις μακρίμυτοι δὲ ἀρχῆς τὸ ἀποτίθαι. Only the *Colchi*, and *Egyptians*, and *Ethiopians* had originally the custom of *Circumcision*. Or else these *Odomanes* might be some of the dispersed *Jews* in *Armenia*, where *Strabo* mentions a *Region* call'd *Odomanis*, and so they *Geogr.* retained the name of the place from whence they came, after their removal into *Thrace*. But whatever these *Odomanes* were, they were far enough from the *Spartans*, who never were thus suspected of *Judaism*, nor laugh'd at for *Circumcision*. So that this opinion of *Grotius* on that account seems not very probable. *Bochartus*, who hath been so happy in many other conjectures, yet here gives out, unless it may depend upon the testimony of *Claudius Iolans* in *Strophaneus Bizarrius*, who fabulously derives the *Jews* from one *Judans Sparton*, who went from *Thebes* along with *Bacchus* into the Wars; which *Sparton* they might confound with another *Sparton* the Son of *Phoronius*, the Founder of *Sparta*; which yet is rejected as a Fable by *Pausanias* in *Lacedaemonia*. Surely the *Lacedaemonians* were very ambitious of kindred with the *Jews*, that would claim it upon such

Canon. I.
Sag. p. 332.

grounds as these, especially at such a time when the people of the *Jews* were under distress, and their *kindred* might be like to cost them so dear : And if they had never such a mind to have claimed *kindred* with the *Jews*, they would certainly have done it upon a more plausible testimony than the Fable of one *Claudius Iolaus*, that had neither sense nor reason in it ; and yet supposing his Fable true, it had been nothing to the purpose, without the linking another Fable to it, which was so gross, that even the *Greeks* themselves were ashamed of it, who were always the most daring Forgers of Fables in the world. But let us see further what the *Divine* (as some have loved to call him) *Jos. Scaliger* saith to it : All that he saith, is only a wonder or two at it : *Quid mirum quàm Lacedæmonios ab Abraham prognatos esse, &c.* and a refutation of an absurd opinion, that *Oebalus* the Father of *Tyndareus*, and Grandfather of *Castor*, *Pollux*, and *Helena*, was the same with *Ebal*, mentioned *Gen. 10. 28.* which there can be no reason for, since *Ebal* was the Son of *Jothan*, and so of another race from *Abraham* ; and *Jothan's* Sons were placed *Eastward*, but chiefly *Oebalus* was within an hundred years before the destruction of *Troy* ; but *Phaleg*, Uncle to *Ebal*, dyed 664 years before *Oibalus* in *A. M.* 1993. Thus far then we cannot find any plausible account of this claim of *kindred* ; but though it be an endless task to make good all the claims of *kindred* in the World, especially to persons of power and authority, yet there being no visible interest or design which the *Spartans* could have in such a claim, especially at that time with a Nation generally hated and maligned by Heathen *Idolaters*, we cannot suppose but there must be some at least plausible ground for such a persuasion among them. What if we should conjecture that the *Spartans* might find in the *Greek* version of the *Pentateuch*, which was much spread abroad at that time among the Sons of *Ismael*, one whose name makes the nearest approach to their *Cadmus*, from whom they suppose themselves derived : For the youngest of *Ismael's* sons was called *Kedemah*, *Gen. 25. 15.* which the *Syriack* renders *Kedem*, the very name of *Cadmus* in the *Eastern Tongues*. But this being a light conjecture, I pass it by, and return

Ch.4. *The Divine Authority of the Scriptures asserted.* 373

to the subject of our Discourse, which gives a plausible account of the ground of this kindred. We have already shewed that the *Pelasgi* were the first who peopled *Greece* (*ἡ πρώτη τῆς Ἑλλάδος πόλις ἐπιπλάσσι*, is *Strabo's* expression of that Nation, that it spread over all *Greece*) and withall it appears that the chief Seat of the *Pelasgi* was in *Arcadia*, to which next adjoyns *Laconica*; and therefore in all probability was peopled by them; and besides, the *Dorians* sprang from the *Pelasgi*, and the *Spartans* were a part of the *Dorians*, as appears already out of *Grotius*; so that what kindred the *Pelasgi* had, was derived down to the *Spartans*; and we have manifested that these *Pelasgi* were from *Phaleg*, and the Scripture tells us that *Phaleg* was the Son of *Gen* 11. *Eber*, from whom *Abraham* came in a direct and lineal succession. And thus the *Jewes* coming from *Abraham*, and the *Spartans* by the *Pelasgi* from *Phaleg*, they both came out of the same stock. For so *Josephus* expresseth it, not that the *Lacedamonians* came from *Abraham*, but that the *Jewes* and they were both *ἐξ ἑνὸς γένους*, out of the same stock; and both had relation to *Abraham*; the *Jewes* as coming in a direct line, the *Spartans* as deriving from *Phaleg*, from whom *Abraham* came. And thus much may now suffice to clear the first Plantation of *Greece*, and to shew how consonant it is to sacred Scripture; which I have taken the more pains in, because of the serviceableness of this Discourse to that end, and to shew what use may be made of this kind of Learning, for vindicating the honour of the sacred Scriptures.

The only thing remaining as to the origine of Nations, is, the peopling of that vast Continent of *America*, which I cannot think we have yet sufficient information, either concerning the passages thither, especially *East* and *North*, or concerning any Records the *Indians* have among themselves absolutely to determine any thing in it. It seems most probable that the several parts of it were peopled at several times, and from several parts, especially *North* and *East*; but to go about absolutely to determine from what Nation, in what Age, by what means they were first peopled, were a piece of as great confidence as ignorance, till we have

V. Grotium more certain discoveries of it. I choose therefore rather to
Joh. de La- refer the Reader to the bandyings of this Controversie in
et, Horn. de the many Writers about it, then to undertake any thing as
Orig. Gent. to the decision of it. Only in the general it appears from the
American. remaining tradition of the *Flood*, and many Rites and Cu-
V. Manasse stoms used among them, that they had the same original
Ben. Israel. with us, and that there can be no argument brought against
Spes Israe- it from themselves, since some *Authors* tell us, that the eldest
lis. Et *Accounts* and *Memoires* they have, do not exceed 800 years
Spizzel. de backward; and therefore their *Testimony* can be of no va-
Israelitis *lidity* in a matter of so great *Antiquity*, as the *Origine* of
America- *Nations* is.
nia.

CHAP. V.

Of the Origine of the Heathen Mythology.

*That there were some remainders of the ancient history of the world preserved in the several Nations after the dispersion. How it came to be corrupted : by decay of knowledge, increase of Idolatry, confusion of Languages. An enquiry into the cause of that. Difficulties against the common opinion that languages were confounded at Babel. Those difficulties cleared. Of the fabulousness of Poets. The particular ways whereby the Heathen Mythology arose. Attributing the general history of the world to their own Nation. The corruption of Hebraisms. Alteration of names. Ambiguity of sense in the Oriental languages. Attributing the actions of many to one person, as in Jupiter, Bacchus, &c. The remainders of Scripture-history among the Heathens. The names of God, Chaos, formation of man among the Phœnicians. Of Adam among the Germans, Egyptians, Cilicians. Adam under Saturn. Cain among the Phœnicians. Tubalcain and Jubal under Vulcan and Apollo. Niamah under Minerva. Noah under Saturn, Janus, Prometheus and Bacchus. Noahs three sons under Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto, Cansan under Mercury, Nimrod under Bacchus, Magog under Prometheus. Of Abraham and Isaac among the Phœnicians. Jacobs service under Apollo's. The *ἑρμῆα* from Bethel. Joseph under Apis. Moses under Bacchus. Joshua under Hercules. Balaam under the old Silenus.*

THE main particulars contained in the *Scriptures* concerning the History of *Ancient Times*, being thus far cleared, there remains only that evidence which there is of the truth of the historical part of those eldest Times, in those footsteps of it which are contained in the *Heathen Mythology*. For we cannot conceive, that since we have manifested that all mankind did come from the posterity of Noah, that all those passages which concerned the History of the world, should

should be presently *obliterated* and *extinguished* among them, but some *kind* of *tradition* would be still preserved, although by degrees it would be so much altered for want of certain *Records* to preserve it in, that it would be a hard matter to discover its *original* without an *exact* comparing it with the true *history* its self from whence it was first taken. For it fared with this *Tradition* of the first ages of the world, as with a person who hath a long time travelled in *Forreign* parts, who by the variety of *Climes* and *Countreys* may be so far altered from what he was, that his own *relations* may not know him upon his return, but only by some certain *marks* which he hath in his body, by which they are assured, that however his *complexion* and *visage* may be altered, yet the person is the same still. Thus it was in this *original tradition* of the world through its continual passing from one age to another, and the various humours, tempers, and designs of men, it received strange *disguises* and alterations as to its outward *favour* and *complexion*; but yet there are some such certain *marks* remaining on it, by which we find out its true original. Two things then will be the main subject of our enquiry here. 1. *By what means the original tradition came to be altered and corrupted.* 2. *By what marks we may discern its true original, or what evidence we have of the remainders of Scripture-history in the Heathen Mythology.*

§. 2.

1. Concerning the *means* whereby the *Tradition* by degrees came to be *corrupted*. These may be some more general, and others more particular. The general causes of it were,

1. The gradual decay of *knowledge* and increase of *Barbarism* in the world; occasioned by the want of certain *Records* to preserve the ancient *History* of the world in. Which we at large discoursed of in our entrance on this Subject. Now in the decay of *knowledge*, there must needs follow a sudden and strange *alteration* of the memory of former times, which hath then nothing to preserve it, but the most uncertain report of *fame*, which alters and *disguiseth* things according to the *humours* and *inclinations*, and *judgements* of those whose hands it passeth through.

Book I. c. 1.
Sect. 16.

2. The

2. The gradual encrease of *Idolatry* in the world : which began soon after the dispersion of *Nations*, and in whose age, we cannot at so great a distance and in so great obscurity precisely determine; but as soon as *Idolatry* came in, all the ancient *tradition* was made subservient in order to that end; and those persons whose *memories* were preserved in several *Nations*, by degrees came to be worshipped under diversities of names; and such things were annexed to the former *traditions* as would tend most to advance the greatest *superstition* in the world.

3. The *Confusion of Languages at Babel*, was one great reason of corrupting the ancient *tradition* of the world. For in so great variety (as suddenly happened) of *languages* in the world, it cannot be conceived but such things which might be preserved in some uniform manner, had all *Nations* used the same *language*, would through the diversity of *Idioms* and *properties* of several *Tongues* be strangely altered and disguised, as will appear afterwards. This alteration of *languages* in the world upon the confusion of *Tongues* at *Babel*, brought as great a confusion into the original tradition, as it did among those who were the designers of that Work.

And because this subject of the *Original* and cause of this diversity of *languages* among men, doth both tend to explain the present Subject, and to clear the truth of *Scripture-History*, I shall a little further enquire into it. Chiefly on this account, because it is pretended that such a *confusion* is needless which is delivered in *Scripture*, for the producing such diversity of languages, which would arise through meer length of time; and the varieties of *Climes* and *customs* in the world. But if we only speak concerning the sense of *Moses* about it, the enquiry is of greater difficulty than at first view it seems to be. For it is pretended that *Moses* nowhere speaks of a diversity of *languages*, as we understand it, but only of a *confusion* of their speech who were at *Babel*, which might well be although they all used the same *Language*; that is, there might be a confusion raised in their minds, that they could not understand one another; their notions of things being disturbed, so that though they heard one word, they

§. 3.

V. Mer. Cas.
saub. de A.
linguis p. 3.
&c.

Exercit. in
Cardan,
249. sect. 1.

they had different apprehensions of it : some thinking it signified one thing and some another : as *Julius Scaliger* tells us that the *Jews* he had conversed with, did not understand by it a multiplication of Tongues ; but only by that confusion their former notions of things by the same words were altered. As if one called for *אבן* a stone, one by that word understands lime, another water, another sand, &c. this must needs produce a strange confusion among them, and enough to make them desist from their work. But supposing no such division of languages there, yet after their dispersion, which might be caused by the former confusion, by the different Laws, rites, and customs, commerce, and trading, and tract of time, there would have risen a division of their several tongues. But if there were such a division of tongues miraculously caused there (that, as it is commonly said, all those who were of the same language, went together in their several companies) whence comes it to pass, that in their dispersion we read of several Families dispersed, which used the same language after their dispersion ? as all the Sons of *Canaan* mentioned, *Gen.* 10. 15, 16, 17, 18. used the *Canaanitish* tongue : in *Greece*, *Javan* and *Elisa* had the same language. In *Egypt* *Misraim* and *Pathrasim* ; in *Arabia* the sons of *Joctan* and *Cbus*, in *Chaldaa* *Aram* and *Uz* the inhabitants of *Syria*, *Mash* of *Mesopotamia*, *Nimrod* of *Babylon*, *Assur* of *Assyria* : whence comes it to pass if their several tongues were the cause of their dispersion, that these several heads of families should use the same tongue ? Another reason against the common opinion, is this, which seems to have a great deal of force in it. If tongues were divided at *Babel*, as it is imagined ; whence was it, that the nearer any Nation lay to those who had the primitive language the *Hebrew*, they did participate more of that tongue than those who were more remote, as is plain in the *Chaldeans*, *Canaanites*, *Greeks*, and others ? whereas, if their languages were divided at *Babel*, they would have retained their own language as well as others. This very argument prevailed so far with the learned *Is. Casaubon*, as appears by his *adversaria* on this subject (published by the learned Dr. his Son) as to make him leave the common opinion, and to conclude

Distrib. de
L. Heb. p.
37, 18.

conclude the several *Tongues* to be only some *variations* from the *Hebrew*, but yet so as many new words were invented too. Hence he observes that the *Asiatick Greeks* came nearer to the *Hebrew* than the *European*. And if this opinion hold true, it is the best foundation for deriving other *Languages* from the *Hebrew*: a thing attempted by the same learned person, as you may see in the book forecited; and endeavoured by *Gnichardus*, *Avenarius*, and others. Thus we see there is no agreement in mens minds concerning the division of *Tongues* at *Babel*.

But having set down this opinion with its reasons, I shall not so leave the received opinion, but shall first see what may be said for that, and leave the judgement concerning the probability of either to the understanding Reader. And it seems to be grounded on these reasons. 1. That had it been left to mens own choice, there cannot be a sufficient reason assigned of the diversity of *Languages* in the world. For there being one *Language* originally in the world, whereby men did represent their *conceptions* to one another, we cannot imagine that men should of themselves introduce so great an alteration, as whereby to take off that necessary Society, and converse with each other, which even Nature it self did put men upon. Hence *Calvin* and others conclude that *Prodigii loco habenda est Linguarum diversitas*; because there having been that freedom of Converse among men, it is not to be supposed they should of themselves cut it off to their mutual disadvantage. But to this it is said, *That the long tract of Time, and diversity of Customs might alter the Language*. I grant it much, but not wholly; and they would only therein differ in their *Languages*, wherein their *customs* differed; so that there would remain still such an agreement as whereby they might understand each other; which it will be hard to find in many of the eldest *Languages*. As for the length of time, though that doth alter much in reference to words and phrases, in which that of *Horace* holds true, *Multa renascentur qua jam cecidere*, &c. Yet it will be yet more difficult to find where meer length of Time hath brought a whole *Language* out of use, and another in the room of it. But that which I think deserves well to be con-

5. 4.

Annot. in
Gen. 11.
1, 2.

Enquiries.
cap. 2. 6.

Metued.
Hist. c. 9.

Mayer.
Prodr.
Chaldaism.
c. 1.

sidered is this, that the greatest alteration of *Languages* in the world hath risen from *Colonies* of Nations that used another Language, and so by the mixture of both together the Language might be much altered; as the *Hebrew* by the *Chaldees* in *Babylon*, the *Spanish*, *Italian*, and others by the *Latin*, as *Breerwood* shews; our own by the *Normans* and others. So that, were there not diversity of *Languages* supplied, this interfering of people would bring no considerable alteration along with it, no more then a *Colony* from *New-England* would alter our Language here. And as for another cause assigned of the change of Languages, the difference of *Climates*, which *Badin* gives as the reason why the Northern people use *Consonants* and *Aspirates* so much, especially the *Saxons*, and those that live by the *Baltick Sea*, who pronounce thus, *Per theum ferum pibimus ponum finum*. And so *R. D. Kimchi* observes of the *Ephraimites*, *Judg.* 12. 6. that it was the air was the cause of their lisping, and calling it *Sibboleth*, as he there observes of the men of *Samphath*, that is the *French*, that they could not pronounce *Schin*, but pronounced it like *Than Raphe*. But by these examples, we see that this would cause only an alteration as to some letters and syllables, and rather as to the pronunciation, then any variety of the Language. So that we see that, setting aside the confusion of Languages at *Babel*, there can be no reason sufficient assigned for the variety of Languages in the world. 2. Though it be granted, that a confusion in their minds without distinct Languages were enough to make them desist from their work, yet the context in that place, *Gen.* 11. doth infer a diversity of Tongues, as will appear from the antecedents and consequents, as from the first verse, where it is not conceivable why it should be there taken notice of as such a remarkable Circumstance, that then they had but one Language before they set upon this work, if there was not a diversity of Tongues caused by the work they went about; but especially *ver. 6* where God takes such notice of this very thing, that they had but one Language, wherein they were so confident to carry on their work; therefore, *ver. 7*. when he would destroy their work by confounding their Language, it must be by multiplying that Language into many

many more; for it must be taken in *opposition* to what is said in the other verse. And what is there added, *their not understanding one anothers speech*, seems to refer not to the inward *conceptions*, as though they did not understand one anothers *minds*, but to the outward *expressions*, as שפח doth apparently relate to them; further in *ver.* 8. this is set down as the cause of their *dispersion*, which, had the Tongue been the same afterwards as it were before, could have been no reason for it. Again, some argue from the name *Babel* given to the place from בבל which signifies to *confound* and mingle things of several *kinds* together. So used *Judg.* 19. 21. *Esay* 30. 24. *Job* 6. 5. &c. thence the name בבל for בבל the middle ב left out, as in *Golgotha* for *Golgoltha*, *Kikaltha* for *Kilkaltha*, and others of a like nature. Besides, there seems to be somewhat in what is said, *That the Families were divided according to their Tongues*, *Gen.* 10. 5, 20, 31. which doth at least imply a *diversity* of *tongues* among them, the cause of which must be assigned by them who will not allow of the *confusion* and *division* of *Languages* at *Babel*. Further, this seems most agreeable to *Gods* end in making of them thus leave off their work, that there might be not onely a present judgment upon them, but that which might remain to *posterity* as a note of the folly of their *Ancestors*. Those who recede from the common opinion lest they should give advantage to *Infidels* by attributing that to a *miracle*, which might be done without, seem to be more wary then wise in it. For besides that it is certain that *miracles* may be in those things which might be effected otherwise by natural causes; when they are produced without the help of those causes, and in a space of time impossible to nature, and that it hath not been as yet proved how such diversity of *tongues* as is in the World would have been effected without such a *miracle*, it must be granted by them that there was a *miracle* in it; and what greater difficulty there should be in the variety of *Languages*, than in the signification of the same words, I understand not. But I see no necessity of asserting that every one of the *Families* had a distinct *Language*, and the common opinion of 70. or 72. as the *Gr. Families* and as many *Languages*, is now taken for a groundless Fancy by

Noch. Geo.
l. i. c. 15.
Buxt. diatr.
sect. 54.
Buxt. diatr.
sect. 68.

Lips. cent.
3. ep. 44.
Busbeq.
ep. 24.

Mayer.
Philol. sacr.
p. 22 c. 6.

learned men; as is easily proved from the dividing *Father* and *Children*, whose Families could not certainly be without them; and some supposed to be unborn then as *Josians* 13. *Children*; especially if we say, as many do, that the *Confusion* was at the Birth of *Palestine* and *Josian* was his younger brother, as the *Jews* generally do. To the last Objection it may be replied, that the agreement of *Languages* in some *Radical* words doth not infer the *derivation* of the one from the other, as is plain in the *Persian* and *German*, in which Learned men have observed so many words alike. And so by *Busbequius* of the inhabitants about *Tanneche Chelstone*; and so in most of our modern *Tongues* there may be some words alike without any such *dependence* or *derivation*. Again, though it be granted that the *Languages* of them who were at *Babel* were confounded, yet it is not necessary we should say that all *Noahs* posterity were there. It is thought by some that they were chiefly *Cham* and his company: if so, then *Sem* and his posterity might retain the *Language* they had before, only with some *variations*. But this is very uncertain, unless we take it for *Heber* and *Paleg*, from whose vicinity other bordering *Nations* might make use of many of their primitive words; and for the *Greeks*, it will be granted that many of their words, especially the old *Boeotick* had affinity with the *Hebrew*; but it was from the *Pelasgi* at first, and *Cadmus* the *Phœnician* afterwards; the old *Canaanitish* Language, being if not the pure *Hebrew*, yet a *Dialect* of that *Tongue*, as is proved by many learned men. But however these things be, it is not necessary to say that all *Mother-tongues* so called, were then existent at that *Confusion*; but the present *curse* did divide their *Languages* who were there, and that all division of *Languages* since, is to be looked upon as the effect of that *curse*.

It being thus manifested what a strange confusion of *Languages* was caused in the world, we may thereby easily understand how the ancient *Tradition* came to be corrupted and altered in the world.

§. 5.
 (4.) Another reason of the alteration of the ancient tradition, was, the *fabulousness* of the *Poets*; for these made it their design to disguise all their ancient *Stories* under *Fables*, in which

which they were so lost, that they could never recover them afterwards. For the elder *Poets* of *Greece* being men of greater *Learning* than generally the people were of, and being conversant in *Egypt* and other parts, did bring in new reports of the ancient times which they received from the Nations they went to; and by mixing their own Traditions and others together, and by suiting what was remaining of the ancient Tradition to these, they must needs make a strange Confusion of things together, and leave them much more obscure and fabulous than they found them. And herein all their cunning and subtilty lay in putting a new face on whatever they borrowed from other Nations, and making them appear among themselves in a Greek habit, that the former owners of those Traditions could scarce challenge them as theirs under so strange a Metamorphosis. For those things which were most plain and Historical in the Fountains whence they derived them, they did so *pervert*, as *Clement Alexandrinus* speaks (or as *Origen*, *ὁ ἀρχαῖος τις αἰὶν ἔχει*) wrap them up under so great Mythology that the Original Truths can hardly be discerned, because of that multitude of prodigious Fables, with which they have inlaid them. But as great as their Artifice was in the doing this, we may yet discern apparently many of those particular *concesses* which were taken by them to disguise and alter the primitive Tradition.

1. *Attributing* what was done by the great Ancestors of mankind to some persons of their own Nations. Thus the *Thessalians* make *Dencalion* to be the person who escaped the Flood, and from whom the World was peopled after it. And whoever compares the relation of the Flood of *Dencalion* in *Apollodorus* with that in the Scripture, might easily render *Apollodorus* his Greek in the Language of the Scriptures, only changing *Greece* into the whole Earth, and *Dencalion* into *Noah*, *Parnassus* into *Ararat*, and *Jupiter* into *Jehova*. *Apollod. biblioth. l. 1. p. 19.* On the same account the *Athenians* attribute the Flood to *Ogyges*, not that the Flood of *Ogyges* and *Dencalion* were particular and distinct Deluges, which many have taken a great deal of needless pains to place in their several Ages: But as *Dencalion* was of the eldest memory in *Thessaly*, so

was *Ogyges at Athens*, and so the *Flood*, as being a matter of remote antiquity, was on the same account in both places attributed to both these. Because as Mankind was supposed to begin again after the *Flood*, so they had among them no memory extant of any elder then these two, from whom on that account they supposed mankind derived. And on the same reason it may be supposed that the *Assyrians* attribute the *Flood* to *Xisuthrus*, whom they supposed to be a King of *Assyria*; but the circumstances of the Story as delivered by *Alexander*, *Polyhistor*, and *Abydenus*, are such as make it clear to be onely a remainder of the *Universal Flood* which happened in the time of *Noah*. So the *Thessalians* make *Prometheus* to be the *Protoplast*; the *Peloponnesians*, *Phoroneus*, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells us, whom *Phorodides* the Poet calls πατήρ ἡνὸς ἀνθρώπων, the Father of Mankind. This may be now the first way of corrupting the ancient Tradition, by supposing all that was conveyed by it to have been acted among themselves. Which may be imputed partly to their ignorance of the state of their ancient times, and partly to their pride, lest they should seem to come behind others in matters of Antiquity.

Apud Cyril.
c. Julian.
lib. 1.

Sivom. l. 1.

2. Another Fountain of *Heathen Mythology*, was, the taking the *Idiom* of the *Oriental Languages* in a proper sense. For whether we suppose the ancient Traditions were conveyed to them in the ancient *Hebrew* by the *Pelasgi*, or were delivered to them by the *Phœnicians*, or were fetched out of the *Scriptures* themselves (as some suppose, though improbably of *Homer* and some ancient Poets) yet all these several wayes agreeing in this, that the Traditions were *Oriental*, we thereby understand how much of their *Mythology* came by taking the *Hebrew* in a proper and literal sense without attending to the *Idiom* of the tongue. From hence *Bochartus* hath ingeniously fetched many *Heathen Fables*. Thus when *Noah* is said to be *ה'אדם* Gen. 9. 20. which in the *Idiom* of the *Hebrew* onely signifies a Husbandman, they took it in the proper sense for *ὁ ἀνὴρ ὁ γῆς*, and thence *Saturne* who was the same with *Noah* (as will appear afterwards) is made by *Mythologists* the husband of *Rea* which was the same with the *Earth*. So the *Giants* making

making war against Heaven, was onely a Poetical adumbration of the design at the building of Babel, whose top in the Scripture is said to reach **בשמים** which in the Hebrew signifies only a great height; but to aggrandize the Story, was taken in the literal interpretation, that they attempted Heaven. So when they are said to fight against the Gods, Bochartus thinks it might be taken from that phrase of Nimrod, that he was a mighty hunter **יהיה לפני ה' לרודף** before the Lord we render it, but it sometimes signifies against the Lord. So what Abydenus saith of the Giants, that they were *ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἀναχθόντες*, those that came out of the earth, is supposed to be taken from that phrase Gen. 10. 11. **וְצֵא הָאָרֶץ** *terra ipsa exiit*. But far more likely and probable is that which Learned men are generally agreed in concerning Bacchus his being born of Jupiter's thigh, which is onely an expression of that Hebrewism **וְצֵא יְרֵכִי** wherein coming out of the thigh is a phrase for ordinary procreation.

Gen. 11. 4.

Apud Euseb. Prep. Evang. l. 9.

Gen. 46. 6.

3. A third way observable, is, the alteration of the names in the ancient Tradition, and putting names of the like importance to them in their own Language. Thus Jupiter, who was the same with Cham, was called *Ζεὺς πατὴρ Ἰών*, as **Ζεὺς** from **חמם** *fervere, incallescere*. *Ἀπὸ τοῦ ὅτι Ἀρχαῖοι καλεῖται ὁ Δία*, saith Herodotus, him whom the Greeks call Ζεὺς, the Egyptians call Cham. So Japheth, whose memory was preserved under Neptune, to whose portion the Islands in the Sea fell, was called by the Greeks *Ποσειδών*, which comes (saith Bochartus) from the Punick **פשיטו** which signifies large and broad, which in the very importance of the Hebrew **פשיטו** thence in allusion to the name, it is said, Gen. 9. 27. **וַתֵּן אֱלֹהִים לְיָפֶֿתְךָ** *God shall enlarge Japhet*. Thence the Epithetes of Neptune are *ὁ ἐνὶ τῇ θάλασσῃ*, *ὁ ἐν τῇ θάλασσῃ*, all equally alluding to the name Japhet. So *Ἀμόν* in the Greek is of the same importance with the Heb. **שֶׁר** *Damon*, from **שָׂרַר** to destroy. Thence we read, Deut. 32. 17. *they sacrificed לַשֵּׂרִים* to Devils. Canaan in the Hebrew signifies a Merchant; thence Mercury, under whom the memory of Canaan the son of Cham was preserved, is derived by many from **מכר** to sell. Ceres, which was the Inventress of Agriculture, from **גור** which imports bread.

3.

Phileg l. 1. cap. 1.

bread-corn. These and many others are produced by *Vossius*, *Heinsius*, *Bochartus*, and other Learned men, which I insist not on, because my design is onely *digitos ad fontes intendere*, and to make these handsome and probable conjectures, argumentative to our purpose, and to bind up those loose and scattering *Observations* into some order and method, in which they have not yet appeared, nor been improved to that end, which I make use of them for.

4. When the *Oriental phrases* were ambiguous and equivocal, they omitted that Sense which was plain and obvious, and took that which was more strange and fabulous. From hence the Learned *Bochartus* hath fetch'd the *Fable* of the *Golden Fleece*, which was nothing else but the robbing the *Treasury* of the *King of Colchis*; but it was disguised under the name of the *Golden-Fleece*, because the *Syriack word* ניל signifies both a *Fleece* and a *Treasury*. So the *Bulls* and *Dragons* which kept it, were nothing but the *walls* and *brass-Gates*; for נול signifies both a *Bull* and a *Wall*, and נול Brass and a *Dragon*. And so the *Fable* of the *Brass-Bull* in the *Mountain Atabyrim* which foretold calamities, arose from the equivocation of the *Phœnician* or *Hebrew words* נול נול which signify either *Doctor*, *Augur*, or *Bos ex* *ere*, a *foreteller of events*, or a *brazen-Bull*. From the like ambiguity of the word נול arose the *Fable* of *Jupiters* stealing *Europa* in the form of a *Bull*, because the word either signifies a *Ship*, in which he conveyed her away, or a *Bull*; or it may be the *Ship* had נול Bovis, as the *Ship* *Saint Paul* sailed in, had *Gastor* and *Pollux*, it being usual to call their *Ships* by the names of the signs they carried. From the like equivocation in the *Phœnician Language* doth *Bochartus* fetch many other *Heathen Fables*, in his excellent piece *de Phœnicum Colonia*, as particularly that of *Aethusa* coming from *Alphens*, which was from נול a *Ship*, because it was not far from an excellent *Haven*. And so he makes the *Chimera* to be more than a *meer ens rationis*; for he takes the *Chimera* which *Bellerophon* conquered, to be onely the people of *Solyms*, under their three Generals, *Aryns*, *Trosibus*, and *Arsalsus*, נול that signifies a *Lion*. *Trosibus* was נול the head of a *Serpent*: *Arsalsus* was נול a young

Cassian, l.
1. cap. 28.

Cassian, l.
2. cap. 6.

a young Kid, and so the *Chimera* consisted of the form of a *Lion*, a *Goat*, and a *Serpent*. Thus we see how easie a matter it was to advance the *Heathen Mythology* from the equivocation of the *Oriental Languages*, in which their Traditions were conveyed to them.

But yet a more prolifick principle of *Mythology* was by attributing the actions of several persons to one who was the first, or the chief of them. Thus it was in their stories of *Jupiter*, *Neptune*, *Mars*, *Mercury*, *Minerva*, *Juno*, *Bacchus*, and *Hercules*, which were a collection of the actions done by a multitude of persons, which are all attributed to one person. So *Vossius* tells us before the time of the *Trojan Wars*, most of their *Kings*, who were renowned and powerful, were called *Joves*. Now when the actions of all these are attributed to one *Jupiter of Crete*, they must needs swell his story up with abundance of *Fables*. *Vossius* hath taken a great deal of pains to digest in an historical manner the stories of the several *Jupiters*, whereof he reckons two *Argives*, a third the Father of *Hercules*, a fourth a *King of Phrygia*, and two more of *Crete*; to one of which without any distinction, the actions of all the rest were ascribed, and who was worshipped under the name of *Jupiter*. And so besides the ancient *Neptune*, who was the same with *Japhet*, they sometimes understood any *Insular Prince*, or one that had great power at *Sea*; but, besides these, there were two famous *Neptunes* among the *Greeks*, the one of *Athens*, the other the builder of the walls of *Troy*: Now the stories of all these being mixed together, must needs make a strange confusion. So for *Mars*, besides that ancient one they had by the *Oriental Tradition*, they had a *Spartan*, *Thracian*, and *Arcadian Mars*. What abundance of *Mercuries* are we told of by *Tully*? and of no less than five *Minerva's*. Every angry, scornful, jealous *Queen* would fill up the *Fables* of *Juno*, who was equilly claimed by the *Argives* and *Samians*. What contests were there between the *Greeks* and *Egyptians* concerning the Country of *Bacchus*, or *Liber Pater*, whose story was made up of many patches of the *Oriental story*, as will appear afterwards. The same may be said of *Hercules*. Now what a strange way was this to increase the

§. 6.

5.

De Idol. l. 1.

Cicero l. 3.
de Natur.

D.

Ffff

number

number of *Fables* ? when they had *one* whose memory was anciently preserved among them, they attributed the actions of all such to him, who came near him in that which his memory was most remarkable for : And in those things which they did retain of the *Eastern tradition*, it was an usual thing to confound persons, places, and actions together. So the story of *Enoch* and *Methuselah* is joyned together by *Stephanus de Urbibus*, under the name of *Avax*, who is said there to live above 300. years (which agrees with *Enoch* as the name doth) and that at his death the world should be destroyed by a *Flood* ; which agrees with *Methuselah*. So *Abraham* by *Orpheus* is called *μωυσαῖος*, which belongs to *Isaac* his Son ; so the actions of *Nimrod*, *Ninus*, and *Cham*, are confounded together in their *Mythology*. By these several wayes now we understand how the *original tradition* was by degrees corrupted and altered in the *Heathen Mythology*.

- §. 7. I come now to the foot-steps of *Scripture-history*, which, notwithstanding these *corruptions*, may be discerned in the *Heathen Mythology*, which I shall methodically enquire after according to the *series of Scripture-history*. That the names given to *God* in *Scripture* were preserved among the *Phœnicians*, appears sufficiently by the remainders of the *Phœnician Theology*, translated by *Phylo Biblius* out of *Sancho-niathon* ; wherein we read of the God *Iaw*, which hath the same letters with *יהוה* besides wch there we meet with *יאב*, the same with *יהוה* the most High, and *יא*, which is, אל the strong God ; *Beelsamen*, which is *באל שמי* the God of Heaven, and *Elohim*, the very name of *God* used in the beginning of *Genesis* so often. Besides, in those fragments we have express mention of the *Chaos*, and the evening following it, or the *Darkness on the face of the Deep* ; the *Creation of Angels* under the *צבאות שמים* those beings which contemplate the *Heavens*, and the *Creation of mankind* ἐκ τῆς καπνίας ἀνθρώπων ; i.e. *קול פייה* saith *Bochartus*, the *Voice of the mouth of God*, which is by *Gods word* and *Inspiration* when it is expressed that *God said*, *Let us make Man*, and that he *breathed into him the breath of Life*. After we read of *אדם* and *אנשים*, which properly agree to

V. Scaliger.
not. in fr.
Grac.
Selden. de
Diis Syr.
Bochart.
Cens. l. 2.
¶ 22

Ch. 3. The Divine Authority of the Scriptures asserted. 391

to, *Adam*, who was made out of the *Earth*: *Vossius* conceives that the memory of *Adam* was preserved among the old *De Idol. l. i. cap. 38.* *Germans*, of whom *Tacitus* speaks, *Celebrant antiquis carminibus Tuissonem Deum terra editum, & filium Mannum, Tacit de morib. Ger. originem gentis, conditoresque.* Either by *Tuisso* *Adam* is man understood, who was formed of the *Earth*, and by *Mannus*, *Noah*; or by *Tuisso* *God* may be understood, and by *Mannus*, *Adam*: to which conjecture may be added farther, that the same Authour reports that some of the *Germans* sacrificed to *Ifts*, which *Vossius* likewise conceives to be a remainder of the *Hebrew* *Ischa*. And so among the *Egyptians* it is with like probability conceived that *Adam* and *Ischa* were preserved under *Osiris* and *Ifts*, as they were historically taken. In *Cilicia*, the City *Adana* is thought to have some remainder of the name of *Adam*; for the *Greeks* had no termination in *M*. therefore for *Adam* they pronounced it *Adan*, and that from *Adards*, and so the City *Adana*: Now that *Adards*, by *Stephannus de Urbibus*, is said to be the Son of *Heaven* and *Earth*. *Ἐστὶ δὲ Ἀδάρδης υἱὸς ἑὶ Stephanus de Urbibus. ἡ γενεὴ τῆς γῆς.* This *Adams*, he tells us, was otherwise called *Κεφὺρ* or *Saturn*, under whom the *Greeks* preserved the memory of *Adam*: for *Diadorus*, *Thallus*, *Cassius*, *Severus*, and *Cornelius Nepos*, do all (as *Tertullian* saith) confess *Apolog. c. 10.* *Saturn* to have been a man; and, according to their *Fables*, he must have been the first of *Men*. *Saturn* was the Son of *Heaven* and *Earth*, and so was *Adam*; he taught men Husbandry, and was not *Adam* the first that tilled the ground? Besides that power which *Saturn* had, and was deposed from, doth fully set out the *Dominion* man had in the *Golden Age* of *Innocency*, which he lost by his own folly. And *Adams* hiding himself from the presence of the *Lord*, gave occasion to the name of *Saturn*, from *Satar* to hide. We find something of *Cain* preserved in the *Phœnician* antiquities, under the name of *Αἰών* or *Αἰώνης*, the first Countryman or Husbandman, who with his brother *Αἰψὸς* built Houses; and the first foundation of a City is attributed to *Cain*: And on that account *Vossius* conjectures that the memory of *Cain's* wife was preserved under *Vesta*, both because she was the daughter of *Saturn*, i. e. of *Adam*, and

that she is said τὴν ἑμὴν κατασκευὴν εὐρεῖν, to find out first the way of building houses. That *Tubal Cain* gave first occasion to the name and worship of *Vulcan*, hath been very probably conceived, both from the very great affinity of the names, and that *Tubal Cain* is expressly mentioned to be an *Instructor of every Artificer in Brass and Iron*; and as near relation as *Apollo* had to *Vulcan*, *Jabal* had to *Tubal-Cain*, who was the *Inventor of Musick*, or the *Father of all such as handle the Harp and Organ*, which the *Greeks* attribute to *Apollo*. And if that be true which *Genebrard* and others ascribe to *Naamah*, the sister of *Jabal* and *Tubal-Cain*, viz. that she was the *Inventor of Spinning and Weaving*, then may she come in for *Minerva*. Thus we see there were some, though but obscure Footsteps preserved, even of that part of *Scripture-History*, which preceded the Flood.

§. 8. The memory of the Deluge it self we have already found to be preserved in the *Heathen Mythology*: we come therefore to *Noah* and his Posterity. Many parcels of *Noahs* memory were preserved in the scattered Fragments of many Fables, under *Saturn*, *Jannus*, *Prometheus*, and *Bacchus*. *Borchartus* insists on no fewer than 14. *Parallels* between *Noah* and the *Heathen Saturn*, which he saith are so plain, that there is no doubt but under *Saturn* *Noah* was understood in the *Heathen Mythology*. *Saturn* was said to be the common Parent of *Mankind*, so was *Noah*; *Saturn* was a just King, *Noah* not onely righteous himself, but a Preacher of righteousness: The golden Age of *Saturn* was between *Noah* and the dispersion of *Nations*. In *Noahs* time all mankind had but one *Language*, which the *Heathens* extend under *Saturn*, both to men and beasts: The plantation of *Vines* attributed to *Saturn* by the *Heathens*, as to *Noah* by the *Scriptures*: The Law of *Saturn* mentioned by the *Poets*, That none should see the nakedness of the Gods without punishment, seems to respect the fact and curse of *Cham*, in reference to *Noah*. *Saturn*, and *Rhea*, and those with them are said to be born of *Thetis*, or the *Ocean*, which plainly alludes to *Noah* and his companies escaping the Flood; thence a Ship was the symbol of *Saturn*: and that *Saturn* devoured all his

Phaleg. l. 1.
cap. 1.

his children seems to be nothing else but the destruction of the old world by Noah's Flood. And not onely under Saturn, but under Promethens too was Noah's memory preserved. *Diodorus* Biblioth. l. 2. speaks of the great Flood under Promethens; and Promethens implies one that hath forecast and wisdom, such as Noah had, whereby he foretold the Flood, and was saved in it, when others were Epimethens's that had not wit to prevent their own destruction.

And no wonder if Promethens were Noah, that the forming mankind was attributed to him, when the world was peopled from him. Herodotus his saying that Asia was Promethens his wife, might relate to the Countrey Noah lived in and our propagation from thence. Another part of Noah's memory was preserved under Janus; the name of Janus is most probably derived from *Jan* because of Noah's planting a Vine, and Janus was called *Consivius*, saith Macrobius, à *conserendo*, hoc est à propagine generis humani qua Jano autore conseritur; *V. Meyer. Philol. sac. c. p. 2. c. 5.* now to whom can this be so properly applied as to Noah, from whom mankind was propagated? And Janus his being bisrons or looking *ὀπίσσω καὶ ὀπίσσω* forward or backward, is not so fit an Embleme of any thing as of Noah's seeing those two ages before and after the Flood. And it is further observable which Plutarch speaks of in his Roman questions, that the ancient Coins had on one side the Image of Janus with his two faces, on the other *ἡ πρῶτη καὶ ἡ ὑστέρη ἐκδομή*, the fore or hinder part of a Ship, by which the memory of the Ark of Noah seems to have been preserved. Thus we see what Analogy there is in the story of Janus with that of Noah, not that I give credit to those fooleries which tell us of Noah's coming from Palestine with his son Japhet into Italy; and planting Colonies there, for which we are beholding to the spurious Etruscan Antiquities; but all that I assert, is, that the story of Noah might be preserved in the eldest Colonies, though disguised under other names as here in the case of Janus. And on the same account that the name of Janus is attributed to Noah, some likewise believe him to have been the most ancient Bacchus who was according to Diodorus *ἑρμῆς καὶ ἀμύνει*, the first Planter of Vines, and Instructor of men in making Wines; and besides

Philostr.
c. 4

Bacchus his being twice born, seems only an adumbration of *Noah's* preservation after the flood; which might be accounted a second nativity when the rest of the world was destroyed; and withall *Philostratus* in the life of *Apollonius* relates that the ancient *Indian Bacchus* came thither out of *Assyria*, which yet more fully agrees with *Noah*. So that from these scattered members of *Hippolytus* and these broken fragments of *Traditions*, we may gather almost an entire history of all the passages concerning *Noah*.

§.9.

Voss. de 1.
dol. l. 1. c.
18.
Boch. Pha-
leg. l. 1. c. 1.
cap. 2.

As the story of *Saturn* and *Noah* do much agree, so the three sons of *Noah* and those of *Saturn*, *Jupiter*, *Neptune*, and *Pluto* have their peculiar resemblances to each other. Of which *Vossius* and *Bochartus* have largely spoken, and we have touched on already. Besides which, this latter author hath carried the parallel lower, and finds *Canaan* the son of *Cham* the same with *Mercury* the son of *Jupiter*, as it was the curse of *Canaan* to be a servant of servants, so *Mercury* is always described under servile employments; his wings seem to be the ships of the *Phœnicians*, who were derived from *Canaan*, and his being the God of trade noting the great Merchandize of the *Phœnicians*, and *Mercuries* thereby noting the *Pyracies*, or at least the subtilty and craft of the *Phœnicians*; he was the Father of eloquence and *Astronomy*, as *Letters* and *Astronomy* came from the *Phœnicians* into *Greece*. The same Authour parallels *Nimrod* and *Bacchus*, and *Magog* and *Promethæus* together. The name of *Bacchus* is but a light variation of *ברכוש Bar-chus*, as *Nimrod* was the son of *Chus*; and *Bacchus* is called *Nebrodes* by the *Greeks*, which is the very name of *Nimrod* among them, and *Bacchus* is called *Ζαγρεύς*, which excellently interprets *Nimrod's* being a mighty hunter. *Bacchus* his expeditions into *India* were the attempts of *Nimrod* and the *Assyrian Emperors*. On which account *Vossius* makes *Nimrod* or *Belus* the most ancient *Mars*; for *Hesiodus Milesius* speaks of *Enyalios* which is *Mars*, his being in *Sennaar* of *Babylonia*. That the Memory of *Magog* was preserved under *Promethæus*: these things make it probable, that *Magog* was the son of *Japhet*, as *Promethæus* of *Japetus*, and that the posterity of *Magog* was placed about *Caucasus*, where *Promethæus* is fained

De Idol.
l. 1. c. 16.

fained to lie: and the eating of *Prometheus* his heart, is only an interpretation of *כח* which applyed to the heart signifies to waste away and be consumed. Thus far *Bachartus*.

The *Phœnician* antiquities seem to have preserved the memory of *Abrahams* sacrificing his son *Isaac*, by that place which *Eusebius* produceth out of *Porphyries* book concerning the *Jews*, where he relates, how *Saturn* whom the *Phœnicians* call *Israel*, when he reigned in those parts, and had an only son called *Jeoud* of a *Nymph* called *Anobret*, being under 17. *Scaliger*, some great calamity, did sacrifice that son of his being cloathed not. ad. *scilicet* with a royal habit. Here we have a royal perion called *Gr. Israel*, and that *Abraham* should be accounted a King in those elder times, is nothing strange, considering his wealth, *Grot. in* and what prey royalties there were in those times. But *Grot. Deuter.* *ius*, and from him *Vissius*, do not think that *Abraham* was c. 18. v. 10. here called *Israel*, but that the transcriber of *Eusebius* meet- *Voss. de* ing with *א* supposed it to be a contraction of *ישראל*, and so *Idol. 1.* writ it at length; it must be acknowledged, that *א* is used in c. 18. the *Phœnician Theology* for *Saturn*, but yet the circumstances of the story make the ordinary reading not improbable; neither is it strange, that *Abraham* should be called by the name of the people which he was the Progenitor of. That *Isaac* should be meant by his only son called *Jeoud* is most likely, for when God bids *Abraham* go sacrifice him, he saith, *Take thy son*, *א* thy only son, *Jebid* is the same with the *Phœnician Jeoud*. That *Sara* is meant by *Anobret*, the *Gen. 22. 7.* original of the name implyes, which is as *Bochartus* derives it *עוברת הו* *Annobereft*, that is, *ex gratia concipiens*, which *De Phœnic.* the *Apostle* explains, *Through faith Sara her self received* *col. 1. 2 c. 2.* strength to conceive seed. Now all the difference is; that *Heb. 11. 13* which was only designed and intended by *Abraham*, was believed by the *Phœnicians* as really done, that it might be as a president to them for their *א* *Sacramentum* *Sacramentum* of men; a thing so much in use among the *Phœnicians* and all *Colonies* derived from them, as many learned men have at large shewed. But besides this, there are particular testimonies concerning *Abraham*, his age, wisdom and knowledge, his coming out of *Chaldea*, and the propagation of knowledge from him among the *Chaldeans*, *Phœnicians*, and *Egyptians*,

Joseph. Ant.
liq. l. 1. c. 7.
Eus. Præp.
Evangel. l. 9
c. p. 10.

Egyptians, are extant out of *Berosus*, *Eupolemus*, and others in *Josephus* and *Eusebius*, and from thence transcribed by many learned men, which on that account I forbear transcribing as being common and obvious.

§. 10.

Callimach.
Hymn in
Apoll.

Some have not improbably conjectured, that the memory of *Jacobs* long peregrination and service with his *Uncle Laban*, was preserved under the story of *Apollo* his banishment and being a *Shepherd* under *Admetus*. For *Callimachus* reports that *Love* was the cause of *Apollo's* travails, as it was of *Jacobs*, and which mentions a strange increase of *Cattel* under *Apollo's* care, answerable to what the *Scripture* reports concerning *Jacob*. But it is more certain that the memory of *Jacobs* setting up the stone he had rested on for a

Gen. 28. 18

pillar, and pouring oyle upon it, and calling the place *Bethel*, was preserved under the annointed stones which the *Phœnicians* from *Bethel* called *Βαιτόνια*, as hath been frequently

Scalig. not.
in fr. Gr.

observed by learned men; from whence came the custome of anointing stones among the Heathens, of which so very many have largely discoursed. Thence the Proverb of a superstitious man, *πῶτον λίθον ἀνταρὸν ἀνέχουσι*, which *Ar-*

Bochart.
caat. l. 2. c. 2.

nobius calls *lubricatum lapidem & ex olivi unguine sordidatum*.

Seld. de
Diu. Syri.

It seems the anointing the stones with Oyle, was then the

V. Heins. in
Clem. Alex.

Symbol of the consecration of them. The name *Βαιτόνια*

Str. 7.

for such a stone occurs in *Hesychius*, the Greek Etymologist,

Casaub. ad
Theophr.

Damascius in *Photius* and others. That the memory of

p. 295.

Joseph in *Egypt* was preserved under the *Egyptian Apis*,

Herald. ad
Arnob. l. 1.

hath been shewed with a great deal of probability by the

Colvum ad
Apol.

Learned *Vossius*, in his often cited piece of *Idolary*, from the

Florid.

Testimonies of *Julius Maternus*, *Rufinus*, and *Snidas*,

Orzel. &
Elmenhorst

and from these three Arguments. 1. The greatness of the

ad M. nuch.
De Idolola.

benefit which the *Egyptians* received by *Joseph*; which

l. 1. c. 29.

was of that nature that it could not easily be forgot, and

that no symbol was so proper to set it out as the *Egyptian*

Apis; because the famine was portended by lean Kine, and the plenty by fat; and *Minucius* at *Rome* for relieving the

people in a time of famine, had a statue of a golden Bull erec-

ted to his memory. 2. The *Egyptians* were not backward

to testify their respect to *Joseph*, as appears by *Pharaohs*

rewarding of him; now it was the custom of the *Egyptians*

to preserve the *memories* of their great Benefactors by some *symbols* to posterity; which were at first intended only for a *civil use*, although they were after abused to *Superstition* and *Idolatry*. 3. From the names of *Apis* and *Serapis*. *Apis* he conceives to be the sacred name of *Joseph* among the *Egyptians*, and is as much as *אב* Father; So *Joseph* Gen. 45. 8. himself saith, he was a *Father* to *Pharaoh*. And *Serapis*, as *Rufinus* and *Snidas* both tell us, had a *bushel* upon his head, and *Serapis* is probably derived from *שור* *for*, which signifies a *Bull*, and *Apis*. So that by this means the story of *Joseph* is attested by the *Egyptians superstitions*, of which they can give no account so likely as this is.

Many things concerning *Moses* are preserved in the story of *Bacchus*, not that from thence we are to conclude that *Moses* was the *Bacchus* of the *Greeks*, as *Vossius* thinks, but they took several parts of the *Eastern traditions* concerning him; which they might have from the *Phœnicians* who came with *Cadmus* into *Greece*, while the memory of *Moses* was yet fresh among the *Canaanites*. In the story of *Bacchus*, as *Vossius* observes, it is expressly said that he was born in *De Idol.*
Egypt, and that soon after his birth he was put in an *Ark*, l. 1. c. 30. and exposed to the *River*, which tradition was preserved among the *Brasians* of *Laconica*; and *Bacchus* in *Orpheus* is called *Mionis*, and by *Plutarch de Iside & Osiride*, *Palestinus*: and he is called *Βιναῖος* which agrees to *Moses*, who besides his own Mother was adopted by *Pharaoh's daughter*: *Bacchus* was likewise commended for his beauty as *Moses* was, and was said to be educated in a Mount of *Arabia* called *Nysa*, which agrees with *Moses* his residence in *Arabia* fourty years; So *Plutarch* mentions *κορὰς Διορύκου*, the banishments of *Bacchus*, and *Nonnus* mentions *Bacchus* his flight into the *Red-sea*: who likewise mentions his battels in *Arabia*. and with the neighbouring *Princes* there. *Diodorus* l. 20. saith, that *Bacchus* his Army had not only men but women in it; which is most true of the company which *Moses* led, *Orpheus* calls *Bacchus* *Βιναῖος*, and attributes to him *Νιχαῖαν Βιναῖον*: whereby we understand *Moses* his being a *Legislator*, and that he delivered the *Law* in two *Tables*. *Moses* his fetching water out of a *Rock* with his Rod, is preserved

served in the *Orgia* of *Bacchus*, in which *Euripides* relates that *Agave* and the rest of the *Baccha* celebrating the *Orgia*, one of them touched a *rock* and the *water* came out: and in the same *Orgia*, *Euripides* reports how they were wont to crown their heads with *Serpents*, probably in memory of the cure of the fiery *Serpents* in the *Wilderness*. A *dog* is made the companion of *Bacchus*, which is the signification of *Canaan*. I. *Caleb*, who so faithfully adhered to *Moses*. To these and some other circumstances insisted on by *Vossius*, *Bochartus* adds two more very considerable ones; which are, that *Nonnus* reports of *Bacchus* that he touched the two *Rivers* *Orontes* and *Hydaspes* with his *thyrsus* or *Rod*, and that the *Rivers* dried, and he passed through them: and that his *Ivy-staff* being thrown upon the ground, crept up and down like a *Serpent*, and that the *Indians* were in *darkness* while the *Baccha* enjoyed *light*; which circumstances considered will make every one that hath judgement say as *Bochartus* doth; *Ex mirabili illo concentu vel cœcis apparebit, priscos fabularum architectos è scriptoribus sacris multa esse mutatos*, From this wonderfull agreement of *Heathen Mythology* with the *Scriptures*, it cannot but appear that one is a corruption of the other. That the memory of *Josbna* and *Sampson* was preserved under *Hercules Tyrinus*, is made likewise very probable from several circumstances of the stories. Others have deduced the many *rites* of *Heathen worship*, from those used in the *Tabernacle* among the *Jews*. Several others might be insisted on, as the *Parallel* between *Og* and *Typho*, and between the old *Silenus* and *Balaam*, both noted for their skill in divination, both taken by the *water*, Num. 22. 5. both noted for riding on an *ass*: ἐπὶ ὄνυ τὰ πολλὰ ὀχέμεθα, saith *Lucian* of the old *Silenus*; and that which makes it yet more probable, is that of *Pausanias*: ἐς δὲ τῇ Εὐβοίᾳ χεῖρα Σιληνίου μνημα, which some learned men have been much puzzled to find out the truth of; and this conjecture which I here propound, may pass at least for a probable account of it: but I shall no longer insist on these things, having I suppose, done what is sufficient to our purpose, which is, to make it appear what *footsteps* there are of the truth of *Scripture-history* amidst all the corruptions of *Heathen Mythology*.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Excellency of the Scriptures.

Concerning matters of pure divine revelation in Scripture: The terms of Salvation only contained therein. The ground of the disbelief of the Scriptures is tacite unbelief. The Excellency of the Scriptures manifested as to the matters which God hath revealed therein. The excellency of the discoveries of Gods nature which are in Scripture, Of the goodnesse and love of God in Christ. The suitableness of those discoveries of God to our natural notions of a Deity. The necessity of Gods making known himself to us in order to the regulating our conceptions of him. The Scriptures give the fullest account of the state of mens souls, and the corruptions which are in them. The only way of pleasing God discovered in Scriptures. The Scriptures contain matters of greatest mysteriounesse, and most universal satisfaction to mens minds. The excellency of the manner wherein things are revealed in Scriptures, in regard of clearnesse, authority, purity, uniformity, and perswasivenesse. The excellency of the Scriptures as a rule of life. The nature of the duties of Religion and the reasonablenesse of them. The greatnesse of the encouragements to Religion contained in the Scriptures. The great excellency of the Scriptures, as containing in them the Covenant of Grace in order to mans Salvation.

HAVING thus largely proved the Truth of all those passages of sacred Scripture which concern the history of the first ages of the world, by all those arguments which a subject of that nature is capable of, the only thing left in order to our full proving the Divinity of the Scriptures, is, the consideration of those matters contained in it, which are in an especial manner said to be of Divine Revelation. For those historical passages, though we believe them as contained in the Scripture, to have been Divinely inspired as well as others; yet they are such things as, supposing no Divine Revelation, might have been known sufficiently to the world,

had not men been wanting to themselves as to the care and means of preserving them; but those matters which I know come to discourse of, are of a more sublime and transcendent nature, such as it had been impossible for the minds of men to reach, had they not been immediately discovered by God himself. And those are the terms and conditions on which the soul of man may upon good grounds expect an eternal happiness, which we assert the book of Scriptures to be the only authentick and infallible Records of. Men might by the improvements of reason and the sagacity of their minds discover much, not only of the lapsed condition of their souls, and the necessity of a purgation of them in order to their felicity, but might in the general know what things are pleasing and acceptable to the Divine nature, from those differences of good and evil which are unalterably fixed in the things themselves; but which way to obtain any certainty of the remission of sins, to recover the Grace and Favour of God, to enjoy perfect tranquillity and peace of conscience, to be able to please God in things agreeable to his Will, and by these to be assured of eternal bliss, had been impossible for men to have ever found, had not God himself been graciously pleased to reveal them to us. Men might still have bewildred themselves in following the *ignes fatui* of their own imaginations, and hunting up and down the world for a path which leads to heaven, but could have found none, unless God himself taking pity of the wandrings of men had been pleased to hang out a light from heaven to direct them in their way thither, and by this *Pharos of Divine Revelation* to direct them so to steer their course, as to escape splitting themselves on the rocks of open impieties, or being swallowed up in the quick-sands of terrene delights. Neither doth he shew them only what *shelves* and *rocks* they must escape, but what particular *course* they must *steer*; what *star* they must have in their eye, what *compass* they must observe, what *winds* and *gales* they must expect and pray for, if they would at last arrive at eternal bliss. *Eternal bliss!* What more could a God of infinite goodness promise, or the soul of man ever wish for? A Reward to such who are so far from deserving, that they are still provoking; *Glory*

to such who are more apt to be *assumed* of their duties, then of their offences; but that it should not only be a *glorious Reward*, but *eternal* too, is that which though it infinitely transcend the *deserts* of the receivers, yet it highly discovers the *infinite goodnesse* of the *Giver*. But when we not only know that there is so rich a *mine* of inestimable *Treasures*, but if the *owner* of it undertakes to shew us the way to it, and gives us certain and infallible directions how to come to the full possession of it, how much are we in *love* with *misery*, and we do *court* our own *ruine*, if we neglect to hearken to his *directions*, and *observe* his *commands*!

This is that we are now undertaking to make good concerning the *Scriptures*, that these alone contain those *sacred discoveries* by which the *souls* of men may come at last to enjoy a compleat and *eternal happiness*. One would think there could be nothing more needles in the World then to bid men regard their own *welfare*, and to *seek* to be *happy*; yet whoever casts his *eye* into the World, will find no counsel so little *hearkned* to as this, nor any thing which is more generally looked on as a matter *trivial* and *impertinent*. Which cannot arise but from one of these two grounds, that either they think it no great *wisdom* to let go their present hold as to the *good things* of this world, for that which they secretly question whether they shall ever *live* to see or no; or else that their *minds* are in *suspense*, whether they be not sent on a *Guiana voyage* to *heaven*, whether the *certainty* of it be yet fully discovered, or the *instructions* which are given be such as may infallibly conduct them thither. The first, though it hath the *advantage* of *sense*, *fruition*, *delight*, and further *expectation*; yet to a *rational* person who seriously reflects on himself, and sums up what (after all his troubles and *disquietments* in the procuting, his *cares* in keeping, his *disappointments* in his *expectations*, his *fears* of losing what he doth enjoy, and that *vexation* of *spirit* which attends all these) he hath gained of true *consentment* to his *mind*, can never certainly believe that ever these things were intended for his *happiness*. For is it possible that the *soul* of man should ever enjoy its full and compleat *happiness* in this World, when nothing is able to make it *happy*, but what is

§. 2.

most *suitable* to its *nature*, able to fill up its large *capacity*, and *commensurate* with its *duration*: but in this life the matter of mens greatest *delights* is strangely unsuitable to the nature of our *rational beings*; the *measure* of them too short for our vast *desires* to *stretch* themselves upon; the *proportion* too *scant* and *narrow* to run *parallel* with *immortality*. It must be then only a *Supreme*, *Infinite*, and *Eternal Being*, which by the free *communications* of his *bounty* and *goodnesse* can fix and satiate the souls desires, and by the constant flowings forth of his uninterrupted streams of Favour will alwayes keep up desire, and yet alwayes satisfie it. One whose *goodnesse* can only be felt by some transient *touches* here, whose *love* can be seen but as through a *lattice*, whose constant presence may be rather wished for then enjoyed, who hath reserved the full sight and fruition of himself to that future *state* when all these dark *veils* shall be done away, and the *soul* shall be continually *sunning* her self under immediate *beams* of *light* and *love*. But how or in what way the soul of *man* in this degenerate condition should come to be partaker of so great a *happinesse*, by the enjoyment of that *God* our natures are now at such a distance from, is the greatest and most important enquiry of humane nature; and we continually see how *successless* and *unsatisfactory* the endeavours of those have been to themselves at last, who have sought for this *happinesse* in a way of their own finding out; The large *volume* of the Creation, where; in *God* hath described so much of his *wisdom* and *power*, is yet too dark and obscure, too short and imperfect to set forth to us the *way* which leads to eternal *happinesse*. Unlesse then the same *God* who made mens *souls* at first; do shew them the way for their recovery; as they are in a degenerate, so they will be in a desperate *condition*; but the same *bounty* and *goodnesse* of *God*, which did at first display its self in giving being to mens *souls*, hath in a higher manner enlarged the discovery of its self, by making known the *way* whereby we may be taken into his *Grace* and *Favour*, again.

Which

Which it now concerns particularly to discover, thereby to make it appear that this way is of that peculiar excellency, that we may have from thence the greatest evidence, it could come from no other Author but God himself, and doth tend to no other end but our eternal happiness. Now that incomparable excellency which is in the sacred Scriptures, will fully appear, if we consider the matters contained in them under this threefold capacity. 1. As matters of Divine Revelation. 2. As a rule of life. 3. As containing that Covenant of grace which relates to mans eternal happiness.

1. Consider the Scripture generally, as containing in it matters of divine Revelation, and therein the excellency of the Scripture appears in two things. 1. The matters which are revealed. 2. The manner wherein they are revealed.

1. The matters which are revealed in Scripture, may be considered these three ways. 1. As they are matters of the greatest weight and moment. 2. As matters of the greatest depth and mysteriousness. 3. As matters of the most universal satisfaction to the minds of men.

1. They are matters of the greatest moment and importance for men to know. The wisdom of men is most known by the weight of the things they speak; and therefore that wherein the wisdom of God is discovered, cannot contain any thing that is mean and trivial; they must be matters of the highest importance, which the Supreme Ruler of the World vouchsafes to speak to men concerning: And such we shall find the matters which God hath revealed in his Word to be, which either concern the rectifying our apprehensions of his nature, or making known to men their state and condition, or discovering the way whereby to avoid eternal misery. Now which is there of these three, which supposing God to discover his mind to the World, it doth not highly become him to speak to men of?

1. What is there which it doth more highly concern men to know than God himself? or, what more glorious and excellent object could he discover than himself to the World? There is nothing certainly which should more commend the

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Scriptures to us, then that thereby we may grow more acquainted with God; that we may know more of his nature, and all his perfections, and many of the great reasons of his acting in the World. We may by them understand with safety what the eternal purposes of God were as to the way of mans recovery by the death of his Son; we may therefore and understand the great wisdom of God; not only in the contrivance of the World, and ordering of it, but in the gradual revelations of himself to his people, by what steps he trained up his Church till the fulness of time was come; what his aim was in laying such a load of Ceremonies on his people of the Jews; by what steps and degrees he made way for the full revelation of his Will to the World, by speaking in these last dayes by his Son, after he had spoke at sundry times and in divers manners by the Prophets, &c. unto the Fathers. In the *Scriptures* we read the most rich and admirable discoveries of Divine goodnesse, and all the wayes and methods he useth in alluring sinners to himself, with what Majesty he commands, with what condescension he intreats, with what importunity he wooes mens souls to be reconciled to him, with what favour he embraceth, with what tendernesse he chastiseth, with what bowels he pitieth those who have chosen him to be their God! With what power he supporteth, with what wisdom he directeth, with what cordials he refresheth the souls of such who are dejected under the sense of his displeasure, and yet their love is sincere towards him! With what profound humility, what holy boldnesse, what becoming distance, and yet what restless importunity do we therein finde the souls of Gods people addressing themselves to him in prayer! With what chearfulnesse do they serve him, with what confidence do they trust him, with what resolution do they adhere to him in all streights and difficulties, with what patience do they submit to his Will in their greatest extremities! How fearfull are they of sinning against God, how careful to please him, how regardlesse of suffering, when they must chooseth either that or sinning, how little apprehensive of mens displeasure, while they enjoy the favour of God. Now all these things which are so fully and pathetically expressed in *Scripture*, do abundantly set forth to us
the

the exuberancy and Pleonasm of Gods grace and goodnesse towards his people, which makes them delight so much in him, and be so sensible of his displeasure. But above all other discoveries of Gods goodnesse, his sending his Son into the world to die for sinners, is that which the Scripture sets forth with the greatest Life and Eloquence. By Eloquence, I mean not an artificial compofure of words, but the gravity, weight, and perswasivenesse of the matter contained in them. And what can tend more to melt our frozen hearts into a current of thankful obedience to God, then the vigorous reflection of the beams of Gods love through Jesus Christ upon us ! Was there ever so great an expression of Love heard of ! Nay, was it possible to be imagined, that that God who perfectly hates sin, should himself offer the pardon of it, and send his Son into the world to secure it to the sinner, who doth so heartily repent of his sins, as to deny himself, and take up his Crosse and follow Christ ! Well might the Apostle say, *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.* How dry and sapless are all the voluminous discourses of Philosophers compared with this Sentence ! How jejune and unsatisfactory are all the discoveries they had of God and his goodnesse, in comparison of what we have by the Gospel of Christ ! Well might Paul then say, *That he determin'd to know nothing but Christ and him crucified.* Christ crucified is the Library which triumphant souls will be studying in to all Eternity. This is the only Library which is the true *argentea Lixus*, that which cures the soul of all its maladies and distempers ; other knowledge makes mens minds giddy and fluctuant ; this settles and composes them ; other knowledge is apt to swell men into high conceits and opinions of themselves ; this brings them to the truest view of themselves, and thereby to humility and sobriety : Other knowledge leaves mens hearts as it found them ; this alters them and makes them better, so transcendent an excellency is there in the knowledge of Christ crucified above the sublimest speculations in the World.

And is not this an inestimable benefit we enjoy by the Scripture, that therein we can read and converse with all

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these expressions of *Gods* love and *goodnesse*, and that in his own language? Shall we admire and praise what we meet with in *Heathen Philosophers*, which is generous and handsome; and shall we not adore the infinite fulnesse of the *Scriptures*, which run-over with continued expressions of that and a higher nature? What folly is it to magnifie those *lean* kind, the notions of *Philosophers*, and to contemn the *fat*, the plenty and fulnesse of the *Scriptures*? If there be not far more *valuable* and *excellent discoveries* of the *Divine Nature* and *Perfections*; if there be not far more excellent *directions* and *rules* of *practice* in the *sacred Scriptures*, then in the *sublimest* of all the *Philosophers*, then let us leave our *full ears*, and feed upon the *thin*. But certainly no *sober* and *rational Spirit* that puts any value upon the *knowledge* of *God*, but on the same account that he doth prize the *discourses* of any *Philosophers* concerning *God*, he cannot but let a value of a far higher on the *word* of *God*. And as the *goodnesse* of *God* is thus discovered in *Scripture*, so is his *Justice* and *Holinesse*; we have therein recorded the most remarkable *judgements* of *God* upon contumacious sinners, the severest *denunciations* of a *judgement* to come against all that live in sin, the *exactest precepts* of *holiness* in the *World*; and what can be desired more to discover the *Holinesse* of *God*, then we finde in *Scripture* concerning him? If therefore acquaintance with the *nature*, *perfections*, *designs* of so excellent a *Being* as *God's*, be a thing desirable to humane nature, we have the greatest cause to admire the *excellency*, and adore the *fulnesse* of the *Scriptures* which give us so large, rational, and compleat account of the *Being* and *Attributes* of *God*. And which tends yet more to commend the *Scriptures* to us, those things which the *Scripture* doth most fully discover concerning *God*, do not at all contradict those *prime* and *common notions* which are in our *natures* concerning him, but do exceedingly advance and improve them, and tend the most to regulate our *conceptions* and *apprehensions* of *God*, that we may not miscarry therein, as otherwise men are apt to do. For it being natural to men so far to love themselves, as to set the greatest value upon those *excellencies* which they think themselves most masters of;

thence

thence men came to be exceedingly mistaken in their apprehensions of a *Deity*, some attributing *one* thing as a *perfection*, another a *different* thing, according to their *humours* and *inclinations*. Thus imperious self-willed men are apt to cry up *Gods* absolute power and dominion as his greatest *perfection*; easie and soft-spirited men his *patience* and *goodness*; severe and rigid men his *justice* and *severity*; every one according to his *humour* and *temper*, making his *God* of his own *complexion*; and not only so, but in things remote enough from being *perfections* at all; yet because they are such things as they prize and value, they suppose of necessity they must be in *God*, as is evident in the *Epicureans* *Maxima*, by which they excluded *Providence*, as hath been already observed. And withall considering how very difficult it is for one who really believes that *God* is of a *pure*, *just*, and *holy* nature, and that he hath grievously offended him by his sins, to believe that this *God* will pardon him upon true *repentance*. It is thence necessary that *God* should make known himself to the World, to prevent our *misconceptions* of his Nature, and to assure a *suspicious*, because *guilty* creature, how ready he is to pardon *iniquity*, *transgression*, and *sin*, to such as unfeignedly repent of their follies, and return unto Himself. Though the light of *nature* may dictate much to us of the *benignity* and *goodness* of the *Divine Nature*, yet it is hard to conceive that that should discover further then *Gods* general *goodness* to such as please him; but no foundation can be gathered thence of his *readiness* to pardon *offenders*, which being an act of *grace*, must alone be discovered by his *Will*. I cannot think the *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Stars* are such *itinerant Preachers*, as to unfold unto us the whole *Counsel* and *Will* of *God* in reference to mans acceptance with *God* upon *repentance*. It is not every *Star* in the *Firmament* can do that which the *Star* once did to the *wise men*, lead them unto *Christ*. The *Sun* in the *Heaven* is no *Parhelius* to the *Sun* of *Righteousness*. The *new Astronomer* will never find the *day-star* from on high in the rest of his number. What *St. Austin* said of *Tullies* works, is true of the whole *Volume* of the *Creation*, There are *admirable things* to be found in them: but the name of *Christ* is not legible there. The *work* of *Redemption* is not

- engraven on the works of Providence; if it had, a particular divine Revelation had been unnecessary, and the Apostles were sent on a needless errand, which the world had understood without their Preaching, viz. *That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing to men their trespasses, and hath committed to them the Ministry of Reconciliation.* How was the word of Reconciliation committed to them, if it were common to them with the whole frame of the world? and the Apostles *Quere* elsewhere might have been easily answered, *How can men hear without a Preacher?* For then they might have known the way of salvation, without any special Messengers sent to deliver it to them. I grant, that Gods long suffering and patience is intended to lead men to repentance, and that some general collections might be made from Providence of the placability of Gods nature, and that God never left himself without a witness of his goodness in the World, being kind to the unthankful, and doing good, in giving rain and fruitful seasons. But though these things might sufficiently discover to such who were apprehensive of the guilt of sin, that God did not act according to his greatest severity, and thereby did give men encouragement to hearken out & enquire after the true way of being reconciled to God; yet all this amounts not to a firm foundation for faith as to the remission of sin, which doth suppose God himself publishing an act of grace and indemnity to the World, wherein he assures the pardon of sin to such as truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel. Now, is not this an inestimable advantage we enjoy by the Scriptures, that therein we understand what God himself hath discover'd of his own nature and perfections, and of his readiness to pardon sin upon those gracious terms of Faith and Repentance, and that which necessarily follows from these two, hearty and sincere obedience.
- §. 6. 2. The Scriptures give the most faithful representation of the state and condition of the soul of man. The World was almost lost in Disputes concerning the nature, condition, and immortality of the soul before divine revelation was made known to mankind by the Gospel of Christ; but life and immortality was brought to light by the Gospel, and the future state of

of the soul of man, not discover'd in an uncertain *Platonical* way, but with the greatest light and evidence from that God who hath the supreme disposal of *souls*, and therefore best knows and understands them. The *Scriptures* plainly and fully reveal a judgement to come, in which God will judge the secrets of all hearts, when every one must give an account of himself unto God, and God will call men to give an account of their stewardship here, of all the Receipts they have had from him, and the expences they have been at, and the improvements they have made of the talents he put into their hands. So that the Gospel of Christ is the fullest Instrument of discovery of the certainty of the future state of the soul, and the conditions which abide it, upon its being dislodged from the body. But this is not all which the Scripture discovers as to the state of the soul; for it is not only a *prospective glass*, reaching to its future state, but it is the most faithful *Looking-glass*, to discover all the spots and deformities of the soul: And not only shews where they are, but whence they came, what their nature is, and whither they tend. The true Original of all that disorder and discomposure which is in the soul of man, is only fully and satisfactorily given us in the Word of God, as hath been already proved. The nature and working of this corruption in man, had never been so clearly manifested, had not the Law and Will of God been discovered to the World; that is the glass whereby we see the secret workings of those Bees in our hearts, the corruptions of our natures; that sets forth the folly of our Imaginations, the unruliness of our passions, the distempers of our wills, and the abundant deceitfulness of our hearts. And it is hard for the most *Elephantine* sinner (one of the greatest magnitude) so to trouble these waters, as not therein to discover the greatness of his own deformities. But that which tends most to awaken the drowsie, senseless spirits of men, the Scripture doth most fully describe the tendency of corruption, that the wages of sin is death, and the issue of continuance in sin will be the everlasting misery of the soul, in a perpetual separation from the presence of God, and undergoing the lashes and severities of conscience to all eternity.

ty. What a great discovery is this of the *faithfulness* of God to the World, that he suffers not men to *undo* themselves without letting them know of it before-hand, that they might avoid it. God seeks not to *entrap* mens souls, nor doth he rejoyce in the *misery* and *ruine* of his *creatures*, but fully declares to them what the *consequence* and *issue* of their *sinfull* pract ces will be, assures them of a *Judgment* to come, declares his own future *severity* against contumacious sinners, that they might not think themselves *surprized*, and that if they had known there had been so great *danger* in *sin*, they would never have been such *fools* as for the sake of it to run into eternal misery. Now God to prevent this, with the greatest *plainness* and *faithfulness*, hath shewed men the *nature* and *danger* of all their sins, and asks them before-hand what they will do in the end thereof; whether they are able to bear his *wrath*, and *wrestle* with *everlasting burnings*? if not, he bids them *bethink* themselves of what they have done already, and *repent* and *amend* their lives, lest *iniquity* prove their *ruine*, and *destruction* overtake them, and that *without remedy*. Now if men have cause to prize and value a faithful *Monitor*, one that tenders their good, and would prevent their ruine, we have cause exceedingly to prize and value the *Scriptures*, which give us the truest representation of the *state* and *condition* of our souls.

3. The Scripture discovers to us the only way of pleasing God, and enjoying his favour. That clearly reveals the way (which man might have sought for to all eternity without particular Revelation) whereby sins may be pardoned, and whatever we do may be acceptable unto God. It shews us that the ground of our acceptance with God, is through Christ, whom he hath made a propitiation for the sins of the world, and who alone is the true and living way, whereby we may draw near to God with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience. Through Christ we understand the terms on which God will shew favour and grace to the World, and by him we have ground of a *propitiā*, access with freedom and boldness unto God. On his account we may hope not only for grace to
subdue

subdue our sins, resist temptations, conquer the Devil and the world; but having fought this good fight and finished our course, by patient continuance in well-doing, we may justly look for glory, honour, and immortality, and that crown of righteousness which is laid up for those who wait in faith, holiness, and humility for the appearance of Christ from Heaven. Now what things can there be of greater moment and importance for men to know, or God to reveal, than the nature of God, and our selves, the state and condition of our souls, the only way to avoid eternal misery, and enjoy everlasting Bliss!

The Scriptures discover not only matters of importance, but of the greatest depth and mysteriousness. There are many wonderful things in the Law of God, things we may admire, but are never able to comprehend. Such are the eternal purposes and decrees of God, the doctrine of the Trinity, the Incarnation of the Son of God, and the manner of the operation of the Spirit of God on the souls of men; which are all things of great weight and moment for us to understand and believe that they are, and yet may be unsearchable to our reason, as to the particular manner of them. What certain ground our faith stands on as to these things, hath been already shewed, and therefore I forbear insisting on them.

§. 7.
2.

Book 1.
ch. 8. sect. 8.
§. 6, 7.

The Scripture comprehends matters of the most universal satisfaction to the minds of men, though many things do much exceed our apprehensions, yet others are most suitable to the dictates of our nature. As Origen bid Celsus see, *οὐ μὴ τὰ ἐν νουῖς ἀνθρώπων ταῖς κοιναῖς ἐννομαῖς ἀεὶ ὁμοῖον συναναγορεύοντο, καὶ τὸν τοῦ δι' ὁμοιοῦτος ἀκρίβειαν τῶν λεγομένων*, whether it was not the agreeableness of the principles of faith with the common notions of humane nature, that which prevailed most upon all candid and ingenuous auditors of them. And therefore as Socrates said of Heraclitus his books, What he understood was excellent, and therefore he supposed that which he did not understand was so too: so ought we to say of the Scriptures; If those things which are within our capacity be so suitable to our natures and reasons, those cannot contradict our Reason which yet are above them. There are many things which the minds of men were sufficiently assured that they

3.

C. Cel. 1. 2.
p. 135.

they were, yet were to seek for *satisfaction* concerning them, which they could never have had without *Divine Revelation*. As the nature of true happiness, wherein it lay, and how to be obtained, which the *Philosophers* were so puzzled with, the *Scripture* gives us full satisfaction concerning it. True contentment under the troubles of life, which the *Scripture* only acquaints us with the true grounds of; and all the prescriptions of Heathen *Moralists* fall as much short of, as the directions of an *Empirick* doth of a wise and skilfull *Physitian*. Avoiding the fears of death, which can alone be through a grounded expectation of a future state of happiness which death leads men to, which cannot be had but through the right understanding of the Word of God. Thus we see the excellency of the matters themselves contained in this Revelation of the mind of God to the World.

§. 8.

2.

As the matters themselves are of an excellent nature, so is the manner wherein they are revealed in the *Scriptures*; and that,

1. In a clear and perspicuous manner; not but there may be still some passages which are hard to be understood, as being either propheticall or consisting of ambiguous phrases, or containing matters above our comprehensions; but all those things which concern the terms of mans salvation, are delivered with the greatest evidence and perspicuity. Who cannot understand what these things means, What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? that without faith it is impossible to please God; that without holiness none shall see the Lord; that unless we be born again, we can never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; these and such like things are so plain and clear, that it is nothing but mens shutting their eyes against the light can keep them from understanding them; God intended these things as directions to men; and is not he able to speak intelligibly when he please? He that made the tongue, shall he not speak so as to be understood without an infallible Interpreter? especially when it is his design to make known to men the terms of their eternal happiness. Will God judge men at the great day for not believing those things which they could not understand? Strange, that ever

ever men should judge the *Scriptures* obscure in matters necessary, when the *Scripture* accounts it so great a judgement for men not to understand them. If our Gospel be hid, it is ^{2 Cor 4. 3, 4.} hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them. Sure *Lot's* door was visible enough, if it were a judgement for the men of *Sodom* not to see it; and the *Scriptures* then are plain and intelligible enough, if it be so great a judgement not to understand them.

2. In a powerful and authoritative manner; as the things contained in *Scripture* do not so much beg acceptance as command it: in that the expressions wherein our duty is concerned, are such as awe mens consciences and pierce to their hearts and to their secret thoughts; All things are open and naked before this Word of God; every secret of the mind and thoughts of the heart lyes open to its stroke and force; it is quick and powerful, sharper then a two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. The word is a Telescope to discover the great Luminaries of the world, the truths of highest concernment to the souls of men; and it is such a Microscope as discovers to us the smallest Atome of our thoughts, and discerns the most secret intent of the heart. And as far as this light reacheth, it comes with power and authority, as it comes armed with the Majesty of that God who reveals it, whose authority extends over the soul and conscience of man in its most secret and hidden recesses.

3. In a pure and unmixed manner; In all other writings how good soever, we have a great mixture of dross and gold together; here is nothing but pure gold, Diamonds without flaws, Sums without spots. The most current coins of the world have their alloyes of baser mettals; there is no such mixture in divine Truths, as they all come from the same Author, so they all have the same purity. There is a *Urim* and *Thummim* upon the whole *Scriptures*, light and perfection in every part of it. In the *Philosophers* we may meet, it may be, with some scattered fragments of purer metall, amidst

abundance of dross and impure ware; here we have whole wedges of gold, the same vein of purity and holiness running through the whole book of Scriptures. Hence it is called the form of sound words; here have been no *Hucksters* to corrupt and mix their own *Inventions* with *Divine Truths*.

§. 9.

4. In an uniform and agreeable manner. This I grant is not sufficient of its self to prove the *Scriptures* to be *Divine*, because all men do not contradict themselves in their *Writings*; but yet here are some peculiar circumstances to be considered in the agreeableness of the parts of Scripture to each other which are not to be found in meer *humane writings*:

1. That this doctrine was delivered by persons who lived in different ages and times from each other, Usually one age corrects anothers faults, and we are apt to pity the ignorance of our *Predecessors*, when it may be our *posterity* may think us as ignorant, as we do them. But in the sacred Scripture we read not one age condemning another; we find light still increasing in the series of times in Scripture, but no reflections in any time upon the ignorance, or weakness of the precedent; the dimmest light was sufficient for its age and was a step to further discovery. *Quintilian* gives it as the reason of the great uncertainty of Grammar Rules, *quia non analogia demissa caelo formam loquendi dedit*; that which he wanted as to Grammar, we have as to *Divine Truths*; they are delivered from heaven, and therefore are always uniform and agreeable to each other.

Quintil.
l. 1. c. 6.

2. By persons of different Interests in the World. God made choyce of men of all ranks to be *andlers* of his Oracles, to make it appear it was no matter of *State-policy* or particular interest which was contained in his Word, which persons of such different interests could not have agreed in as they do. We have *Moses*, *David*, *Solomon*, persons of royal rank and quality, and can it be any mean thing, which these think it their glory to be penners of? We have *Isaiah*, *Daniel*, and other persons of the highest education and accomplishments, and can it be any trivial thing which these employ themselves in? We have *Amos*, other *Prophets* in the old Testament, and the *Apostles* in the New, of the meaner sort of men

men in the world, yet all these joyn in *consort* together; when God tunes their *Spirits*, all agree in the same strain of *divine truths*, and give *light* and *harmony* to each other.

3. *By persons in different places and conditions*; some in *prosperity* in their own Countrey, some under banishment and adversity, yet all agreeing in the same *substance* of *doctrine*; of which no *alteration* we see was made, either for the *flattery* of those in *power*, or for avoiding *miseries* and *calamities*. And under all the different *dispensations* before, under, and after the *Law*, though the management of *things* was different, yet the *doctrine* and *design* was for substance the same in all. All the different *dispensations* agree in the same common *principles* of *Religion*; the same *ground* of *acceptance* with God, and *obligation* to *duty* was common to all, though the peculiar instances wherein God was served might be different according to the *ages* of growth in the *Church* of God. So that this great *uniformity* considered in these circumstances, is an argument that these things came originally from the same *Spirit*, though conveyed through different *Instruments* to the knowledge of the World.

5. *In a persuasive and convincing manner*: and that these wayes. 1. *Bringing divine truths down to our capacity*, cloathing spiritual matter in familiar expressions and similitudes, that so they might have the easier *admission* into our minds. 2. *Propounding things as our interest*, which are *our duty*: thence God so frequently in Scripture, recommends our *duties* to us under all those *motives* which are wont to have the greatest force on the minds of men: and annexeth gracious *promises* to our performance of them; and those of the most weighty and concerning things. Of *grace*, *favour*, *protection*, *deliverance*, *audience* of *prayers*, and *eternal happiness*; and if these will not prevail with men, what *motives* will? 3. *Courting us to obedience*, when he might not only command us to obey but punish presently for *disobedience*. Hence are all those most *pathetical* and *affectionate* strains we read in Scripture. O that there were such a heart within them, that they would fear me and keep all my *Commandments* always, Deut. 5. 29. that it might go well with them, and with their children after them.

them. Wo unto thee O Jerusalem, wilt thou not be made clean?
 Jer. 13. 27. *when shall it once be? Turn ye, turn ye from your evil wayes,*
 Ez. k. 33. *for why will ye dye. O house of Israel! How shall I give thee*
 11. *up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I*
 Hof. 11. 8. *make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine*
heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.
 Mat. 23. 37 *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy*
children together, as a Hen gathereth her chickens under her
wings, and ye would not? What Majesty, and yet what sweet-
nisse and condescension is there in these expressions? What
obstinacy and rebellion is it in men for them to stand out
against God, when he thus comes down from his throne of
Majesty, and wooes rebellious sinners to return unto him
that they may be pardoned, Such a matchless and unparal-
leld strain of Rhetorick is there in the Scripture, far above
the art and insinuations of the most admired Orators. Thus
we see the peculiar excellency of the manner wherein the
matters contained in Scripture are revealed to us: thus we
have considered the excellency of the Scripture, as it is a
discovery of Gods mind to the World.

§. 10. The Scriptures may be considered as a rule of Life; or as a
 2. Law of God, which is given for the government of the lives of men, and therein the excellency of it lyes in the nature of the duties, and the encouragements to the practice of them.

1. In the nature of the duties required, which are most becoming God to require, most reasonable for us to perform.

1. Most becoming God to require, as they are most suitable and agreeable to the Divine Nature, the imitation of which in our actions is the substance of our Religion. Imitation of him in his goodness and holiness, by our constant endeavours of mortifying sin and growing in grace and piety. In his grace and mercy by our kindness to all men, forgiving the injuries men do unto us, doing good to our greatest enemies. In his justice and equity, by doing as we would be done by, and keeping a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men. The first takes in the duties of the first, the other the duties

duties of the second Table. All acts of piety towards God, are a part of *Justice*; for, as Tully saith, *Quid aliud est pietas nisi iustitia adversus Deos?* and so our loving God with our whole hearts; our entire and sincere obedience to his will, is a part of natural justice, for thereby we do but render unto God that which is his due from us as we are his creatures. We see then the whole duty of man, the fearing God, and keeping his Commandments, is as necessary a part of *Justice*, as the rendering to every man his own is.

2. They are most *reasonable* for us to perform; in that 1. *Religion*, is not only a service of the reasonable faculties which are employed the most in it, the commands of the Scripture reaching the heart most, and the service required being a *spiritual service*. not lying in meats and drinks, or any outward observations, but in a sanctified temper of heart and mind, which discovers its self in the course of a *Christians* life. But 2. The service its self of *Religion* is *reasonable*; the commands of the Gospel are such, as no mans reason which considers them, can doubt of the excellency of them. All natural worship is founded on the dictates of Nature, all instituted worship on Gods revealed Will; and it is one of the prime dictates of Nature, that God must be universally obeyed. Besides, God requires nothing but what is apparently mans interest to do; God prohibits nothing but what will destroy him if he doth it; so that the commands of the Scriptures are very just and reasonable.

2. The encouragements are more then proportionable to the difficulty of obedience. Gods commands are in themselves easie, and most suitable to our natures. What more rational for a creature then to obey his Maker? all the difficulty of Religion ariseth from the corruption of nature. Now God to encourage men to conquer the difficulties arising thence, hath propounded the strongest motives, and most prevailing arguments to obedience. Such are the considerations of Gods love and goodnesse manifested to the world by sending his Son into it to dye for sinners; and to give them an example which they are to follow, and by his readines through him to pardon the sins, and accept the persons of such who fore-

ceive him as to walk in him; and by his promise of grace to assist them in the wrestling with the enemies of their salvation. And to all these add that glorious and unconceivable Reward which God hath promised to all those who sincerely obey him; and by these things we see how much the encouragements over-weigh the difficulties, and that none can make the least pretence that there is not motive sufficient to down-weigh the troubles which attend the exercise of obedience to the Will of God. So that we see what a peculiar excellency there is in the Scriptures as a Rule of Life, above all the precepts of meer Moralists, the foundation of obedience being laid deeper in mans obligation to serve his Maker, the practice of obedience being carried higher in those most holy precepts which are in Scripture, the Reward of Obedience being incomparably greater than what men are able to conceive, much less to promise or bestow.

- §. II. The Excellency of the Scripture appears, as they contain in them a Covenant of grace, or the transactions between God and Man in order to his eternal happiness. The more memorable any transactions are, the more valuable are any authentick records of them. The Scriptures contain in them the Magna Charta of Heaven, an Act of pardon with the Royal assent of Heaven, a Proclamation of good-will from God towards men; and can we then set too great a value on that which contains all the remarkable passages between God and the souls of men, in order to their felicity, from the beginning of the World? Can we think, since there is a God in the world of infinite goodness, that he should suffer all mankind to perish inevitably without his propounding any means for escaping of eternal misery? Is God so good to men as to this present life; and can we think, if mans soul be immortal, as we have proved it is, that he should wholly neglect any offer of good to men as to their eternal welfare? Or, is it possible to imagine that man should be happy in another world without Gods promising it, and prescribing conditions in order to it? If so, then this happiness is no free gift of God, unless he hath the bestowing and promising of it; and man is no rational agent, unless a reward suppose conditions

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ditions to be performed in order to the obtaining it; or man may be bound to *conditions* which were never required him; or if they must be required, then there must be a *revelation of Gods will*, whereby he doth require them. And if so, then there are some *Records extant* of the transactions between God and man, in order to his *eternal happiness*: For what reason can we have to imagine that such *Records*, if once *extant*, should not continue still, especially since the same *goodness of God* is engaged to preserve such *Records*, which at first did cause them to be indicted. Supposing then such *Records extant* somewhere in the World of these grand transactions between God and mens *souls*, our business is brought to a *period*; for what other *Records* are there in the world that can in the least *vye* with the *Scriptures*, as to the giving so just an *account* of all the *transactions* between God and men from the *foundation* of the world? Which gives us all the *steps, methods, and ways* whereby God hath made known his *mind and will* to the World, in order to mans *eternal Salvation*. It remains only then that we *adore and magnifie* the *goodness* of God in making known his *Will* to us, and that we set a *value and esteem* on the *Scriptures*, as on the only *authentick Instrument* of that *Grand Charter of Peace*, which God hath revealed in order to mans *Eternal Happiness*.

FINIS.
